

Sample Copy

Snake Hill to Spring Bank

Volume II





Snake Hill to Spring Bank Volume II



The Changes in the Groveton Area

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Introduction

The Groveton area has undergone rapid changes from sparsely populated farm land to a variety of densely populated suburbs. These changes have become the theme for Groveton High School's publication of oral history in print—*Snake Hill to Spring Bank, Vol. II*. These changes reflect the attitudes, traditions, jobs, wildlife, and landmarks of the community. With the help of knowledgeable residents, students of Groveton High have actively researched and recorded those changes in order to compile a second volume of the publication which originated two years ago as a bicentennial project.

Students participated in at least two interviews, one of which they followed through to the last step of sending it to the printer. This meant hours of word for word transcribing from the taped interviews. All the material was then edited with careful attention given to preserving the oral quality of the taped interview and the character of the narrator. Some students did additional research in pertinent documents or by untaped telephone interviews.

Our thanks to:

JACK ABBOTT—A birder who practices this hobby near Hunting Creek and Dyke Marsh, two of his favorite places in the community.

WALDRON ADAMS—A long time resident of the Gum Springs area.

WALTER ANDERSON—A psychiatrist at the Belle Haven medical center.

RUSSELL ALLEN—A graduate of Groveton High, now attends Groveton's games and is a member of the Groveton Boosters Club.

PAT ARNOLD—A lifetime resident of New Alexandria and the former owner of Pat's Market on Belle Haven Road.

SLADE BARNES—Came to the Groveton area in 1939. He shared his extensive knowledge of the history of the area with us.

LEONARD BARTELS—A captain in the United States Army. His family has lived in both Bucknell Manor and Hybla Valley.

JOE BEARD—Retired, was the county agricultural agent for Fairfax County from 1937 to 1970.

VIRGINIA BENNETT—Wife of LAWRENCE BENNETT, and LENA SHERWOOD are daughters of Bert Ayres, owner of the Ayres Dairy Farm and also known as the "Knight of Groveton."

ALISON BROWN—A lawyer, he has knowledge of the changes in racial discrimination laws and is a resident of Hollin Hills.

RUBY BURDETTE—Lives on Memorial Street. She worked at the Beacon Hill Airport from its beginnings in 1925.

EVERETT CLOCKER—A retired forester and resident of the community for 25 years, is interested in saving Dyke Marsh.

CHESTER CHINN—Chief of the Penn Daw Fire Department.

MIKE DESMOND—A resident of the Cherry Arms Apartment on Route 1 tells a story about a deer that fought its way to death inside his apartment.

ESTHER DEVERS—Owned the first fried chicken business on Route 1 and recalls much of Groveton's past from the early 40's.

RICHARD DODSON—A long time resident of Franklin Street who is a student of Civil War activities in this area.

JOE DOVE—The community's first paid fireman and its first mailman.

ED EICHELBERGER—An employee of the Fairfax County Park Authority for many years. He is the resident caretaker of Stoneybrooke Mansion.

RAY GALLAGHER—A resident of the Belle Haven area and the author of several articles on local history.

DICK HAMMERSCHLAG—A member of the Park Service at Haines Point with an overview of the Potomac.

KATHERINE HECOX—Lives in Bucknell Heights. Gives her views on the changes in the community during war time.

HERBERT HUDSON—Chief of Police at the Groveton substation. Captain Hudson grew up in the community.

LEONARD and SUSIE MANTIPLY—residents of the Fairhaven community and active in the Fairhaven Civic Association.

CAS NEER—An architect whose experience in the Hollin Hills development includes living there and planning additions to its houses.

KATHERINE POPKINS—Wife of Earl Popkins, now deceased, and the owner of Popkins Farm.

PENNY PROFFIT—Builds driveways and tennis courts in the community. His father, also in the building trade, helped widen Route 1.

WILLIAM RANDALL—Long time resident of Spring Bank tells the history of the Randall Estates property.

EDWARD RISLEY—Active in community affairs with a special interest as a Friend of Dyke Marsh.

HARRISON ROUSE—A caretaker for the Mt. Vernon plantation and was a fireman for the Penn Daw Fire Department.

RICK SAMPSON—Director of the Social Center which meets in the old Catholic Church and one room school at the corner of Popkins Lane and Route 1.

EDITH SPROUSE—Resident of Hollin Hills and a historian of the community. She is chairman of the History Commission of Fairfax County.

ALLAN STEVENS—Director of the National Puppet Center in Alexandria and the son of John Stevens, caretaker of the Mt. Vernon Unitarian Church.

HILLCRESS STOKES—A resident of the Quander Road community all his life.

EDWARD STOOPS—Recalls the landing of lighter than air craft at the Hybla Valley airport.

CARL TAVENNER—Tells of the site for a school house that was part of Washington's estate.

E. C. TRICE—A state trooper patrolling Route 1 from Alexandria to Ft. Belvoir.

ROWENA VIAR and GARTH VIAR—The wife and son of Mr. Bill Viar who owned the horse stable where Bucknell Elementary is now.

EMILY VOZZOLA—Was a teacher at Groveton Elementary School.

TOM VUONG and NANCY QUAN—Two students at Groveton High School whose families recently moved to our community.

BUSHROD C. WASHINGTON—A descendant of George Washington's family who maintains an interest in local history.

BUCKY WILSON—A former volunteer fireman for the Penn Daw Fire Department.

These local residents have generously shared their knowledge about the area and without their help and patience the publication of this book would not have been possible.

Landmarks



Plane at Beacon Field

Burdette

We rented that field, when we got there in 1925. It was just open pasture. We flew the plane in from St. Louis. That started the airport.

We had students and eventually several other planes were there. They would build a shop where they were trained to repair the planes. They had great big wings. It had a standard engine. If anything happened to the wings they would be recovered.

Then it became Ashburn flying school. Mr. Bob Ashburn took it all over and then he had a flying school there. He trained students and I worked in the office.

The first airplane that was there was in 1925 and it was flown in from St. Louis and it made it. Later other people had their own planes there. There were different models. Not a great many, say four or five to start out with. The boys came out from Washington mostly and other parts of the county, and took instructions. My husband was the instructor and we also had another young man from Aldurn, Virginia.

There were always accidents of some kind, and there were fatal mishaps later on. Most everybody pitched in and students and everybody helped.

When there was an accident the wings had to be repaired. The wings had to be doped and covered when they were broken and destroyed. We got the material from Bolling Field and they were taken from old parachutes. It was a very nice silk material and we'd cut it out and then repair the wings, put dope on them, and get 'em together again.

Quite a few of the students did learn to get their pilots license. Of course it's quite different from what they get now, but I mean they did learn to fly those things.

Fifteen dollars an hour was the rate on flying lessons until they were able to take over for themselves.

I didn't fly myself. I had two small children and I thought the best thing for me was to stay on the ground.

There was a field at that time in Hybla Valley. They handled Eagle Rocks. They had an agency for Eagle Rocks and that was the Rodeson Brothers. Also there was a man came there, his name was Woodhouse. He had a big dream of buying up all land down at Hybla Valley, and opening a Zepplin airfield but it all fell through. These two young men had this Eagle Rock dealership down there and they did have a training service down there too.

Arthur Godfrey came to Beacon field and he learned to fly there. He was a regular visitor. Mr. Frank Blair, he worked for the Washington News, had an airplane and kept it there. He came out regularly to fly his own plane. A lot of people gradually bought their own planes.

When Mr. Ashburn took over I was responsible for telling them which area they could stay in and which they couldn't stay in. I had to go through quite a "rigamarole" to get that. We had an area and if they got out of that area I was in trouble which wasn't very good. It was around Mount Vernon and up the river. You had to stay on a certain territory. The Civil Aeronautics Board had a control of that.

National Airport, when it first started, was a smaller place. There used to be a little race track called "Boggy Bottom" there, somewhere, and they began to fly out of that at first. But of course National Airport came quite a lot later.

The airport was where Beacon Mall is now. As a rule we had a big wind sock, and they usually took off from that field, from north to south. Of course it had to be according to the wind. If the wind wasn't in the right direction at that time when they were flying those things, why you had to be careful. If the wind was in the opposite direction, you went to the other end and went with the wind. There was no taking off from east to west, because the field wasn't wide enough.

The "Beacon Light" was put there. It was a revolving light that directed airplanes at night into this area, and all into the Washington area. That was the first beacon light in this area, and it was on that field.

When we started in there it was a cow pasture. And we rented it to Mr. Pierce Reid.

We also had a guy in there that had a little black plane called a "Camel." It was a queer looking thing and the guy that flew it was just about as queer. We started with a Standard, OX5 motor with banner. It had enormous wings, and an awful loud motor. It did get off the ground and come back. We used to have people come out from Washington and get their pictures taken beside the planes.

At that time there was no communications, you just looked after yourself, because there wasn't that many airplanes around at that time. We were the first ones around this part of the country. Also Eagle Rock had their's at Hybla Valley field. That was about the only two besides College Park.

On the plane it said \$2.50 for a ride. Quite a few came out and just took a chance on it and took rides in it, mostly on Sunday afternoon and Saturdays. There wasn't any flying for distance. They'd fly over the area. We used to fly out to Rockville and Gaithersburg, Maryland.

He went out to the Robinson Aircraft Corporation in Saint Louis where Lindberg was. (At that time Lindberg was flying the mail out of there), and he took this course. His diploma is there. He got his diploma in 1926. He bought the plane, there and flew it back here to Groveton, and it landed out there where the Beacon Mall is.

My husband was a man before his time, in a way, and he had always had an idea about wanting to fly. His father was in a position to do it, so he sent him to St. Louis to that Robinson place out there for training.

There was one guy who come in from New York and had a glider. That created quite a bit of excitement. Eventually people would come in, from cross country and like that, but not too far.

When Mr. Ashburn took over we had a number of different kinds up there, Ronkas and Piper Cubs. I saw most all of the wrecks. The boy that I said got killed out there, I've forgotten just what plane he was flying now, but it was either a Ronka or a Piper Cub. He was crazy about flying, but he was reckless. He wanted to take all kinds of chances. He was the only one that got killed on that field. Then there was another young man, now he didn't belong to the field. He flew in here from somewhere else. He crashed it in my back yard, which was where the car wash is now. That had no connection with the Burdette airport. That was when the Ashburns worked there. Then there was my husband. He had one accident there. He came in too low and hit the wires up there where the First Federal is now. He didn't get hurt but he damaged the plane right much.

Mr. Ashburn built this little hanger, and the office was up over top of it. A lot of people kept their planes there. They were repaired there also. It was really called the Ashburn flying school. Then when the Second World War come on, of course they made us move back from the coast.

The community had mixed feelings. Some of 'em didn't like it and some of 'em were opposed to it. Especially later on when the school was built there. They won out and we kept the field until after the war.

We trained a lot of girls up there too. We had the girls program and I was quite excited. You'd be surprised at how many there were, and a lot of 'em did go on to get in the air force. They had a class type program, and then they would have so many hours that was included in this program. It depended on the individual of course on how many hours it takes to get their pilot's license. Some of 'em will get it in a shorter time than others, but they have to have so many flights and then when they were capable, when they were able to takeoff and land and make the required pattern, then they got their private learner's permit; then their private pilot's license.

I think they started out at 16 or 18. I know there were a lot of the boys that came out there that probably were a little bit younger but that wasn't the strictest rule and regulation that they had. In the later years, I think it was 18 that they began training.

Proffit

The plane was a DC-4 and the story was that the pilot had been told to bring the plane down to a two hundred foot level. This hill is exactly two hundred feet. He had his landing gear down and the landing gear actually came through the lilac hedge, just like you were making a perfect landing. Then it was immediately after that, the disaster befell it. The wing hit the little pump house that they had up there. It sheared it off just like it had been cut off with a razor blade, wing height. It ran through some hedges and down this little valley right across the street. The left wing hit into the bank and flew up on the hill. It nosed over, stood on its nose and was on fire at that time. None of the people were killed. I think the co-pilot lost an eye. All the survivors got out safely. Nylon stockings were very much sought after at that time. The survivors of the crash came up to the house and this woman says, "Oh my goodness, I've torn my nylons." I guess that was one of the biggest disasters.

Stoops

I've lived in this area since 1939. My occupation was shop foreman at the District of Columbia Correction Department in Lorton, Virginia.

Beacon Field was an airport, which was owned by Colonel Reid. Where the Safeway store used to be, and now Memco, that's where he had his home. His son ran the airport and during World War II they used to train navy pilots on the field. We had the watch service up on top of Collard Street. We had the tower where we watched for planes. We had our men going up the streets for blackouts.

Mr. Crocket got a store across the highway, down at Lee Street, which was the only store around in this section, where you could buy meats or any kind of can goods. They also had a bar there and a restaurant. He had lodging for the night and little cabins outside. That was called the "White Owl Inn," and that was known from Florida to Maine. Penn Daw Motel was also a Motel where people used to come out from Alexandria to eat. They had a restaurant and cabins for the accommodations of tourists.

Fairhaven was built back in, I say around '38, '39, or '40. There's one part where gypsies have moved in there, and a palm reader I believe. There is different nationalities that are living around here now, that wasn't around here in the earlier days. That comes with the population growth.

Here at Groveton on the top of this hill is the highest point on Number 1 Highway from Maine to Florida. The early maps used to show elevation, in sea level. Years ago, when the Graf Zeppelin visited the United States, it flew through Washington, D.C. and the vicinity looking for a field to land. They were told in Hybla Valley there was a small airport. The Graf Zeppelin came over from Washington, flew around this vicinity, and finally made a landing in Hybla Valley. The captain of that ship, predicted that was one of the finest spots that he had seen for landing lighter than air crafts. Some people were very enthused about it. They wanted to put a small air field for dirigibles and blimps.

They used to have quite a few blimps fly around Washington and this area. When one of these big dirigibles flew around the county side they were immense, ranging from 500 to 600 feet long and flying so low you could really get a good view of what the ship looked like. It was a great thrill for the kids to see it flying through the skies.

Viar

GARTH VIAR: Well, we moved to the Groveton area in 1930, 1934, down where Perkins Pancake House is now. The house was a white stucco house. Right across the street there was a motel called Evelyn Inn. The Penn Daw Hotel was there and there was big mansion down where K-Mart is now, called Spring Bank, which dated back to colonial times.

ROWENA VIAR: I think that was one of the Mason homes originally. I don't know the details on it but I'm sure it was owned by a Mason.

GARTH VIAR: It was just torn down. Well it had deteriorated, just a little of it left, that's what they tore down and built K-Mart. There was Beacon Airport where the Beacon Mall Shopping Center is now which was run by a fellow by the name of Reid. His father owned all that land and also had a big mansion about where Memco is now. Memco or Holly Farms, right along in there.

ROWENA VIAR: Arthur Godfrey used to keep his airplane there. He used to fly to that airport before he became a national T.V. star, radio star. He used to be on local radio, WJSV, which is now WTOP.

GARTH VIAR: They also used to have horse shows up there at the Beacon Airport, that was after they stopped using it as an airport. The horse shows were sponsored by the fire department. The horse shows were one of the factors in the building of the fire department. We got no money from the county because it was strictly a volunteer fire department.

Right where Bucknell Heights is, where the elementary school is at the crown of that hill, is where my father, Bill Viar, had his stables. Where Bucknell Manor is, is where our riding trails were. We used to rent horses, train jumping horses and show horses. Quite a few of them come out of there were the best. I guess one of the best known

jumping horses all up and down the east coast was named "Hijack." The horse could jump 6½ foot and could get up to 7 foot.

ROWENA VIAR: When we moved down here to this area, it was real country. Some of the vacant lots that had not been built on, in Groveton, still had little corn stubbles where they had cut down corn, cause it had been farm. All of that was farm land. They had just started building the Groveton subdivision when we first moved out here. Where the old Groveton High School is now Bryant, had been farm owned by a fellow name of Burt Ayres. He had a dairy farm and then they made it into a gravel pit.

GARTH VIAR: Burt Ayers and Lud Popkins used to ride in the jousting tournaments. That was before we moved to Groveton. Lud Popkins, his farmland, joined right into Burt Ayers. That's all houses now. Just past going up Popkins Lane, past where the old Groveton High School is, where the stone houses are, that was just cow pastures.

Where National Airport is now that was all river. They put gravel on top of all those woods and everything. Most of that gravel that went into National Airport came out of Burt Ayres gravel pit. What didn't come out of that pit came out of my father's pit which is right across the road where the telephone building is.

ROWENA VIAR: Then where that gravel pit is, was originally Ayres' property too, cause we bought it from Ayres.

GARTH VIAR: Off of King's Highway, where Stoneybrooke is, there's a little subdivision in there. That house there dates back to colonial times. I don't know the exact history on it but I do know its been remodeled. They say that even on a foggy morning or evening you can stand on the porch of that place and see a coach and four horses driving around the circular driveway. Thats been a legend for a long time. I think they even wrote about it in the Gazette a couple years ago.

Over next to Mount Comfort Cemetery on Kings Highway there's a big hollow there, they call Dead Man's Hollow. Thats supposed to date back quite a few years. Somebody got killed in that hollow and they say that his ghost still comes back.

There was the Nightingale, it dates back to the 30's. The original Nightingale Club, right where the 1320 club is now, it burned down. It was made of logs. The logs came from the property where Woodley Hills trailer court is now, and Mr. Nightingale built a larger one that operated as the Nightingale Night Club.

Down on North Kings Highway across where the Jefferson Manor Shopping Center is there used to be a great big white mansion. That was called Mt. Eagle Club which dated back to colonial times, was originally a colonial home.

We had this one goat who liked to drink beer. He was quite a beer drinker. He would sit down on his hind legs and hold his front paws up and hold a bottle of beer. He would use them like bare hands and hold the beer bottle and drink the whole bottle of beer. You would never want to leave a 2 x 4 or anything leaning against the barn or he would go up on the roof of the barn. He could get up but he couldn't get back down, so you would have to go up and get him.

Down where Bucknell Manor is there used to be a pack of wild dogs, 25-30 in the pack. I guess they roamed through that part 5 or 6 years before they were ever rounded up. They had gone wild and ran in a pack, just like a pack of wolves.

The gypsies came in somewhere around '39. I don't know whether they caused any trouble. They did have a gypsy camp. They sort of stayed to themselves.

Over where Georges is now, they had sort of a restaurant called "Mom's Place" which, in comparing then to now, would be more or less like a truck stop. They had some cabins and a few gypsies moved into those cabins and then they set up gypsies stand. There was quite a few of them, they even came in with children. They didn't have the

gypsy wagons as portrayed in the movies but they had trucks with bodies built on them. I guess they would be equivalent to the old conventional gypsy wagons. There might be still some living in the area right now.

ROWENA VIAR: Seems to me there was another group of them over around the Fort Hunt area. Of course, they always used to say they were part Indian.

GARTH VIAR: There used to be an airport called the Hybla Valley airport. It was like Beacon Airport, privately owned, private planes. All of that was originally designed for what they called an air junction back in the 20's and 30's. It was a dirigible airport called the Mount Vernon Air junction where Lockheed Boulevard comes off of Fordson Road. There was a little building on the east side of what is now known as Lockheed Boulevard.

It's like a little office building on each side of what is now Lockheed Boulevard, with a big archway over top of it that said "Mount Vernon Air Junction." You could walk through this archway. One of the buildings went into this archway, you could walk across and come down the ladder over on the other side. I used to play in them when I was a kid.

ROWENA VIAR: What's the name of that Motel up there by the house where we used to live?

GARTH VIAR: It's the John Yancey Motel now. I think, it used to be called the Wagon Wheel.

ROWENA VIAR: There's a restaurant, and in back of that a big house. We lived in that house at one time. And that's where they used to come play. Well it was really deserted at that time except that Mr. Aicholz lived in part of it.

GARTH VIAR: Mr. Aicholz was sort of a hermit, I guess you might say. He lived by himself, he raised pigs and he more or less squatted in one of those buildings. But anyway that was set up for a dirigible airport and then after the Hindenberg crashed they called it off. So it never did materialize. The Navy had part of the land which Fairfax County later got.

Popkins

This farm and Lud's together was 385 acres. Ayres came between Route 1 and Lud's. Then Lud bought the little chapel, in other words bought the school and left it for St. Louis. Then Father Smet got into it so they could build the church.

The whole thing, the two farms, was 385 acres all together. George was the first child, and then Lud and then Maude. Lil and Earl are the youngest. George went to Washington and he worked for the district government and Lil worked for the federal government. Jack went to Texas and married a woman from down Texas.

Earl was three years old when they came here. He was born 1893. I was born 1894. He bought it through Senator Edwards of New York. Then he died and they finished paying for it through the boards. When I got here it was paid for.

The road when I first came out here was nothing but gravel to the highway till Earl and Lud gave the road to the state. Popkins Lane belongs to the state. They paved the road up to Coventry Road. Then they stopped. They didn't come up here to do a thing. We had the double gate. He shut it at night. It was down at Popkins Lane.

As you go past those double gates we had four apple trees. And then all along the road near the fence we had cedar trees. They had a strawberry patch and they told me if I picked the berries I could get money for them if I took them to town.

All the trees have died except one. Everyone said, "Don't cut it down because it looks so pretty up there with all the birds on it."

Coventry Road wasn't there then, it belonged to us, you see. We got rid of White Oaks during W.W. II. That's how White Oaks developed.

The house and all is the same, but they had two cherry trees out on the hill. Everything was just typical country in other words. Real farmers those days.

This house was built from the lumber of Fort Lyon.

When we had heat put in we had a little wooden door, like a little basement, and where the wooden door is we would put potatoes and stuff like that for the winter. It would preserve them. But then when we had heat put in we wanted radiators so we had to get somebody to dig under the house. So Dick Ferguson, he had to crawl on his stomach and dig and dig and dig all under here so we could get radiators here.

I didn't realize how much work till I got out here. His mother and father was still living here. And they were very nice. I got along fine. I can't say anything about my in-laws, just as nice as could be.

Will Randall was almost like one of the family. He and his brother, George, they real old fashioned colored people, always nice. The Wilkinson's farm is down over the hill, Kirk Wilkinson's place. I didn't know too much of the farm. We had to borrow money to pay off the other Ayres, I knew that much. That was back when Earl's father died and he was the only farmer, so the other six had to be paid off. We had to borrow money from the bank to do that.

We made a pond for the cows to walk in and keep the flies off in the summer. The kids used to go up there and bathe and they wasn't very particular about bathing. The cows stayed there all night long but they (the kids) bathed there anyway.

The pond fed from all kinds of natural springs. When they built houses on them, I don't know what happened to the springs.

Milk really tasted like milk. We used to make butter. Now I buy butter but it don't taste the same.

The horse and buggy horse was Faxie (Fairfax). Earl, he had stuck to the same names as Maude or May, or Nellie and May or something. We had a riding horse, Alice, a very expensive horse. We used to breed horses in those days.

We used to have so many dogs. We've always had dogs around here ever since I've come out here we've had either English setters or hounds. The last dog I had was an Irish Setter. His name was Jeb. I don't know where we got him. But he was a nice dog and a big dog; he was so ferocious you couldn't get near him. He'd knock you down and he'd look at you. He'd jump up on you. So Charlie Beach—I said, "Charlie, you tell Jean (it was a friend he worked with) if she wants a good dog, come down here and get this Jeb."

I couldn't put up with Jeb cause when I got up in the morning, if he knocked me down I couldn't get up! And nobody would know I was down there, so I don't know what might happen to me. I might freeze to death or something or other so I got rid of Jeb. That's the last dog I had and I don't want any more.

We had some ducks, but the ducks never did stay there very long. Somebody had duck dinner.

I don't hear much about the church any more. I'm not working over there and I don't know much about what's going on. In fact, when I read the bulletin, I don't know any of the names even. I used to take care of the little chapel on Saturdays. I'd go clean up and bring the linens home, wash them and take them back. That was my job on Saturdays.

Our courting in those days was buggy rides and over to Burgundy Farm where they had dances on Saturday nights. We'd drive over in a buggy. Lud and Leo lived over there and had dances on Saturday night. We'd go to the dance and come home at midnight. Some of the neighbors had an orchestra.

I had a girlfriend who married a man by the name of Cane. She said, "Let's go down by the river tonight." I forgot what excursion it was. I said, "Oh, I don't know."

"Oh come on," she says, "I'm not going to have any fun alone, so come with me."

I said, "OK, then, you and I can go as a date." We got down to the water. There was Frank and the other man standing there.

I said, "Who's Frank there with?"

She said, "Oh, I was talking to him the other day and he said he might go down."

I said, "You fooled me, didn't you? You brought me down here so you could have a date."

So then Frank came up and introduced me to Earl.

We'd go to a movie, maybe, on Saturday. I'll tell you my feelings of a thrill on Saturday night when I was a youngster was to go down to King Street at Mr. Blocks and get some ice cream, ten cents a dish. I'd get a quarter a week. I'd go to a movie for fifteen cents and get my ice cream for ten cents. That was my whole weeks wages. Try and do something like that now for a quarter.

I could look out this window and see the Potomac and go down on the hill and see the boat go down to Marshall Hall all lighted up. But you can't see anything anyways near the Potomac now on account of the trees and houses all built up.

We had three men and Hunt Day, he was the oldest. He'd come through White Oaks singing and waking people up. People always knew when Hunt was going to work. You could hear him singing.

Anne Pollard, she's the daughter of Jim. She came up here and worked, washing and ironing for a dollar and a half a day. She worked 7 til 7. She'd walk home. You can't get anything like that now.

I had a cookstove. They'd bring wood in. And in the dining room and the living room we had a potbellied stove to keep warm.

It was during the Civil War, I think, the northerners came here and used it more like a hospital. Then it was burned down.

During World War II we had it right down there where Penny Proffit lives—the headquarters. They had everything down there. They'd bring the garbage up here and in those days we fed it to the pigs. I swear it was a shame to see all that good meat and everything being thrown away.

Henson's brother-in-law, he always calls me "boss lady," said something about staying at the farm at night. I said, "Oh, I'm not scared."

He said, "You're not?"

I said, "No, I'm not scared when I have spirits walking around the house with me. There's seven people that died here. They didn't hurt when they were alive and they're not going to hurt me when they're dead." I hear 'em walking around at night and I hear 'em talking to me at night but I can't understand what they're talking about. I wake up furious at night.

Stevens

You know the field at the top of the hill? Apparently there was a grave of an American Revolutionary soldier. I can't possibly tell you the name, but when I was little most of the tombstone was still there.

I suppose we moved up to the hill in . . . 1946. The estate was privately owned by Marilyn Lillian Thorpe. Apparently it was at its peak about ten years before that when the gardens were still very attractive. Lillian used to throw fancy garden parties, so it was terribly sophisticated stuff. Merl Thorpe was into oil and magazine publishing or something like that. The place was really elegant in a slightly after art-deco kind of way.

The windmill was still turning. It was still pumping when I was a kid. On the major drive shaft there was a flange, which was actually to keep the rain from leaking into the plate that went around the drive shaft and I used to be able to stand on the little flange and ride up and down on the drive shaft of the windmill. It was the old well and later on a new well was put in way out farther in the field with an electric pump, at which time the windmill, except for decorative purposes, went into disuse.

There was a wonderful sign that used to hang out on Fort Hunt Road that said Hollin Hall. It was a metal cut out sign. It had two trees, one was a little fir tree and a bigger one like oak tree and there was a cardinal sitting in the kind of like oak tree and squirrel sitting down on the ground looking up at it. It was all open work. I have no idea what became of the sign.

The Old Mansion is terribly sensitive to pressure and if you close one door downstairs, you may open three upstairs or vice versa. On occasions when I was sort of house sitting the Old Mansion house and there were some freaky occasions when I knew I was the only one in the house and I had closed all the doors and I would come back a little bit later and all the doors would be open. There was one time I remember in particular. The kitchen side of the house, the windows were open to let a little air in and I came home one afternoon, came into the kitchen and I heard children playing downstairs, so I carefully opened up the little door at the bottom of the kitchen stairs and tippy-toed my way up, looked around, and needless to say, no children anywhere to be seen. I started running up and down halls, checking rooms, going up on the third floor and constantly, I could hear the children. They seemed to be coming from those two front rooms in the old servant's quarters. I called my papa on the telephone and said "I believe there's ghosts in this here house!" I even held up the phone and said, "Can you hear them? Can you hear them?" What it is, the house being on a hill, it was really acting like radar.

One of the Thorpe sons was a music critic for the Star. At any rate, he was a musician, and a little opera was done. This was long before the church was there or everything cultural got there. Later on, when the church got into action, all kinds of things started to happen. First the Boxwood Concerts.

They started out rather quietly, like Charlie Byrd coming over to play, and a couple of folk singers called "Bud and Travis." Originally the stage was in the lower bowl which is now Mason Hill. There was a little tiny stage that wasn't very big. It was like a band shell and the acoustics sounded just lovely.

Then the productions got more extravagant. The stage got to be ten times bigger and it pulled a couple of real turkey events, the Don Cossack Dancers or something like that, which went over like a lead balloon. The big event was the "Limelighters." An enormous crowd showed up and it rained. I'm not sure they had rain insurance or not. Anyway, that kind of ended the "Boxwood Concerts" series.

A couple of years after that, some friends and I decided that was an ideal place to hold a theatre. We called it the Boxwood Theater. We did that for seven years in all. We were playing in the oval grove at the top of the hill. We did *Tom Thumb the Great* followed by *Oedipus at Colonus*, followed by *Cadus and Marisand*, *Victims of Duty*, and finally a play called *Clearer Tomorrow*. From there we wanted to keep "Boxwood" alive. We did a season of "Boxwood" in Georgetown. Next year we did *Romeo and Juliet*, and the *Girl of the Golden West* over at the top of the hill. Next year, we moved down to the swimming pool, where the concrete slab is now. We did *Peer Gynt*, *Mid-Summer Night's Dream*.

The opening night of the first Boxwood show, they paved Mason Hill Drive. Cars couldn't get up it and because they had to reroute a lot of stuff the water was turned off. So not only could they not get to us, but once they got there they had no water to drink, or for the johns or anything. We'd been warned about the water, so we had vats of it ready to do whatever we had to do. It still didn't save people the inconvenience of walking up from Fort Hunt Road to the top of the hill. People did it though.

The year after that the girls decided they wanted better parts so we did a whole season of heroines. There was *Alice in Wonderland*, *Electra* and *Undine*. Next year we did only one piece called *Dimension of Miracles*. By the next year things took a very different turn. We did *The Maids of Jenine*, in the chapel, and *King Henry the V* which Robert Dunn directed. We did that all over the grounds. That was the end of my career and the Boxwood theatre.

I can remember the first time I saw a puppet, which was in Alexandria. In the window of Mike's Hardware Store was a puppet theatre built by some Cub Scouts. I went home and made up a little puppet of colored construction paper and cut it out and tried to glue it together with Vaseline. It didn't work.

Year by year the place begins to look more rundown. I don't think it has lost all it's charm. Naturally the older it gets, the more money it should cost to really keep it up properly. Gone are the days of the formal gardens, full of roses and fields of dahlias.

When I was at my youngest there was a tree behind the junior house. It had a low fork in it and we used to get up in one little branch. The branch is gone, but the tree's

still there. I spent my teenage years in an old apple tree. It had good swinging branches. I walked out of it one day. I had this branch I used to walk on a lot. I had no idea what was on my mind, I simply walked right straight off the end. My father was standing at the back of the potting shed, and happened to be looking out and he just roared. I could've broken my neck. I think he would've roared anyway. Down in the woods behind the turkey sheds, there was a tree with a swing in it.

The whole area was a land grant to him (George Mason). I think he might've built Little Hollin Hall but I really don't think he lived that far down the road. I'm sorry that the area has suffered from overbuilding as much as it has. The last section of woods that was ripped out was really important. It was like wild, wild forest even though it was maybe 100 yards wide.

Tavener

Mr. Tavener has lived at 3600 Lockheed Blvd. for most of his life. "I came into the area in 1927. The land had come from a Mr. Pearson. I built this house in 1955 or so." Mr. Tavener said that a Henry Wood lived on the other side of Harrison Lane. "Mr. Wood sold his land to the government for a dirigible airport about 1935. There used to be a lot of hunting back in them woods behind Henry Wood."

Mr. Tavener commented about the many changes that have taken place over the years. "There used to be an old school for colored folks built by George Washington. A few years back they plowed it up, and now a Mr. Alcorn has a house there." About half a mile behind the Alcorn's house, there is a heavily wooded area. According to Mr. Tavener the government used to have road tests of some sort there. "That was before they gave it to the county for a park." He also said that a McWilliam family sold a lot of land to a Mr. Owens for a cemetery. "That's where Mount Comfort (cemetery) is now!"

Barnes

The first public school that was built in the United States was built by George Washington. It was built down on Harrison Lane, and the foundation is still there today. Right out in the woods, right out there about 100 yards is the stone foundation for that school house, and the house right there on the corner is built out of the material that was torn down from that school house.

Before Mount Vernon High School was built, which was opened in 1940, they went to school in Lee Jackson High School in Alexandria on Duke Street. That took care of the territory from Alexandria to Woodbridge to Annandale. You know where the old Groveton grammar school is? At the time they built that little school it had eight small rooms to it, but the people in this area got up in arms and wanted to know where they was going to get enough children to fill that school!

When they built Mount Vernon they didn't have any gym. Groveton High School was the first high school built in Fairfax County that had a track or stadium that was built by the School Board. Before Mount Vernon when they played basketball they went to Fort Belvoir and played in the Quonset hut down there at Fort Belvoir. They didn't have an auditorium. When they had a commencement exercise, they went to the Reed Theater in Alexandria.



The Social Center, formerly school and church on the corner of Popkins Lane and Route 1

Sampson

The building, as I understand it, is about 120 years old. It was first built as a mission church, then it became a Fairfax County public school. Some people say it was a Catholic church first, some say it was a school. I don't know to be honest with you, but I do know it was a one room school house for a good bit of time. The front doors and the back were added on later. So the original building was one room. It was the only Catholic church in the area for a long time. Then the parishoners in St. Louis decided they needed a bigger facility and began to build the new church.

About five years ago we came over here and asked if we could use the building for our programs. We're a rehabilitation program, working with adults with emotional problems in the community. In the evening the building is used by scouts, brownies, F.H.A.'s, 4-H and a lot of different clubs.

Now we're moving out. We can't get licensed in the state working in a building that is in this kind of condition. The volunteer groups in the church might get together and donate their time and rebuild the building. All the flooring and subflooring is rotting, so it is going to have to be ripped out. The roof and the A frames are rotting. A lot is going to have to be done.

There is an equal chance that it will be bulldozed to get rid of it.

If the community doesn't pick up on the building it will probably be demolished.

Our program is part of the new movement toward mental health in the community mental health system. The community mental health movement is about 10 or 15 years old. It resulted in the building of the new Mount Vernon Community Health Center. What they began to find out was that all the people were shipped out of the hospital, sent back to the community with only the community health center for support. They begin to find out that it wasn't enough and people needed something to do during the day if they can't get a job. Then we began to have programs. It started out pretty much like a social club, which is just a place for people to come and hang out, shoot pool and play cards. They had counseling available to them. It was mostly a place to go so you could live a comfortable life.

The last four or five years, that whole thing has changed to shift the emphasis on rehabilitation. Now we have a rehab counselor who works in vocational training and job placement. We spend a lot more time doing things like group meetings. We talk about goals for change, about how you change, and deal with people's feelings. We offer skills courses like cooking, sewing, homemaking skills, job finding skills, and interpersonal skills. We do actual teaching on how to interact better.

We are in very close conjunction with the community mental health centers and department of social service and private doctors. Generally what happens is a person will be referred here from one of those organizations for the daytime program.

Dixie Pig

The history of the Dixie Pig was shared with us by Mr. Slade Barnes. He told us that the original building, situated on Route 1, was built by Mr. Reagan on the edge of his farm. It was called the Sun Light Grill. A restaurant known as the Dixie Pig was located near the Potomac River. The land on which it was situated was converted into parkland, after which the restaurant moved to its present location.

The baseball diamond next to the Dixie Pig was used for a carnival ground by the fire house. The restaurant was sold several times. During the war it was closed and the owner's family lived in it. In 1946 brick was added and the windows in the Dixie Pig were remodeled.

Wilson

Two women originally opened this (Dixie Pig) and I think, one of the women is still active in it. The two women split up 'cause the Dixie Pig name was supposed to be private and the recipe and everything was supposed to have been theirs. They give the recipe to the one in town there. The other woman she broke away from them and opened a "Southern Pig" down at Penn Daw back in the early 40's.

Sprouse

I've been interested in the history of this area about 15 years and I started out knowing nothing about it. I went on a tour that the AAUW had some years ago. Before that I always thought, well, Mount Vernon was down there and it's very well known and Alexandria was up here and it's very well known and there wasn't anything in between. I found there *was* something in between and this got me curious about it, so I've been working with local history quite a while and learning as I went along, because it's something you really have to teach yourself.

I think maps show you what used to be here and what the roads looked like and who lived in the area. I tracked down a great many people simply by finding them on a map and seeing if the house was still there or just driving around looking for houses that looked as though they might have been there for quite a while.

I am also the chairman of the county History Commission and we have made an inventory of landmarks in the county, about 215. There are great places like Mount Vernon. Some of them are very modest and some of them are not places at all. The ruins of Belvoir, where the site is under the ground, is an archaeology site. The watering trough as you go up Fort Hunt Road where the horses used to drink water—that's on there too, because it represents something rare in the county.

In 1891 when they were first talking about building a boulevard to Mount Vernon, if you wanted to get to Mount Vernon it wasn't really too easy. You had to go down what was Route 1 and then at Gum Springs take 235 toward Mount Vernon. When they first started talking about it there was a gentleman named George Washington Ball who lived in this area. He proposed that the road to Mount Vernon should follow the route Washington had actually taken. It came down Kings Highway past Mt. Eagle and Spring Bank, then along Quander Road, cutting through the present Bucknell Manor and Popkins Farm, continuing to Gum Springs. Ball wrote an explanation of his map, "The Vicinity of Mount Vernon in Ye Olden Times," showing the exact location of the neighboring seats and the route of the road habitually used by Washington between his house and Alexandria.

When they finally built Mt. Vernon Boulevard it didn't come down Quander Road, but, if he could have advised them that's how it would have come.

I think the first major change was the shift in the crop from tobacco which had been the main crop before the Revolution and which exhausted the soil, to wheat and corn, which, even before the Revolution, was beginning to replace tobacco in this area. After the Revolution the big tracts were broken down as the land was worn out.

The younger members of the family very often would take off for the west and therefore the value of the land went down in the early 19th century and even towards the Civil War land around here was selling for \$20 to \$40 per acre. It wasn't very much, and the land wasn't any good. They weren't farming scientifically.

In this general area around Mt. Vernon it wasn't until Quakers from New Jersey area came down and started applying scientific farming to the land did they get it to produce anything. It was only then that the legacy of doing farming and market gardening came into use around here.

During the Civil War it was a no-man's land and there were enough forts in the general vicinity so that all the trees had been cut down, some buildings had been torn down, and others had burned. The people really had to start all over again and there was a very gradual build up as far as agriculture and land until almost the end of the 19th century. By then there was quite a lot of market gardening going on. If you look very closely you can still see a barn here and there. Suburbia, I think, has destroyed more than that. It's taken houses like Spring Bank and turned them into shopping centers.

In this part of the county I think they really built about as much as they can build.

QUESTION: Do you think there are archaeological finds in this area?

There's one that we know of on Popkins farm, called Clifton Lodge. It was built very early in the 19th century. There's an insurance policy on it for 1815, I believe, and it was torn down during the Civil War. Mrs. Popkins' vegetable garden roughly is the location of it. I think it could be found very easily. There is another one down on Sherwood Hall Lane, Hollin Hall, that burned about 1827. The location is approximately known. There's one at Hayfield down at Telegraph Road that we could pinpoint pretty closely. I think there are quite a few around now.

The county has a tremendous amount of resources. We have been working for the last couple of years indexing the county court records started in 1749.

We have that all done through 1807 and we are gradually working our way up although some of the books are missing. We have an almost complete set of deed books that go back to the time the county was founded. We have just made a major discovery—the two registers of free blacks from the early 19th century. In the 1790's a law was passed in Virginia that every black who was not a slave had to come to the courthouse and get two certificates saying this, so that he would be protected from being thrown in jail as somebody's runaway slave. This is very good source material telling when they were born, who owned them, and some other details.

We also have on microfilm at the Alexandria library "The Alexandria Gazette." It started in 1784 and there are some issues missing, but it runs pretty consecutively ever since it began, and is a gold mine of information. Unfortunately that has not been indexed and you just have to sit there and read the microfilm. So, there is a good bit of source material to work with in this county. It just takes time to get to, but it's there.

I think it is a very valuable contribution if you can get down on tape what people remember who have been in this area for awhile and have them describe the changes that have been made. One thing we know very little about, although it was mentioned to some extent in the first book, (*Snake Hill to Spring Bank*) were these two airports that were here on Route 1. I think that perhaps you will be able to find more material on that. Again there's not much that's known about New Alexandria. In the 1900's there was quite a flourishing community down there. There were factories and the car barn for the electric railroad.

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West's Grove

Just below Fort Hunt Road lies the ruins of West's Grove, an important early plantation in this area. Built by Hugh West around 1748, it capitalized on its close and favorable position to the newly forming town of Alexandria.

The West family was important in Virginia and Fairfax County politics in the 18th century. Hugh West himself was a Burgess from Fairfax County, a vestryman, and a trustee of the town of Alexandria. His son, John, followed in his father's footsteps with continued public work until he died in 1777.

The home passed from the West's family in 1814 to a Col. Augustine J. Smith who bought the plantation from the last West, James, who died in 1814. Smith is known to have enlarged the original 155 acres to over 1,800. This included the draining of the swamps along the Potomac River and building a dike. This increased his land holding considerably, but the embankments were cut after his death and never repaired. He is also known for his vast building spree where he had no less than thirteen new buildings built for the much enlarged plantation. These included larger slave quarters for the forty slaves he owned.

Smith died in 1830 and after several years the plantation was sold to Dennis Johnston, a man noted for his poor grammar. He did little enlarging to the plantation, still known as West's Grove. He was probably kept busy repairing all of Smith's additions. Mr. Johnston died several years before the Civil War and his wife ran the plantation in his place.

In 1862 the 39th New York Volunteers (Garibaldi Guard) occupied the plantation and later destroyed it completely. An effort is being made to preserve the site as an archaeological heritage.

The source material for this essay includes: *The Alexandria Gazette*, The George Washington Ball map, and various Edith Sprouse articles on local history.

Arnold

MR. ARNOLD: That big empty lot on the corner of Potomac Avenue where they've got that sign, 'for sale,' there was a big apartment house there. Now, that was real old apartments and my parents owned that. It was called Flattops. Flattops was set on fire two or three times. It didn't burn down. The county made Dr. Hughes tear it down cause it was such a fire trap.

We owned a lot of property down here. At one time my parents owned twenty-one pieces of property in New Alexandria. Homes that you see up there on the Potomac Avenue and Belle Haven Road. We owned a lot of land where the Belle Haven Country Club is. I traded them some land after my parents died. We had two cottages we used to rent out. We traded them.

MRS. ARNOLD: In the middle of the golf course! We traded them cash for the land next to the store.

MR. ARNOLD: So, that's how I got some of the land there. A lot of this land here was picked up on back taxes, because they didn't have a record of anybody owning it, and people would come along that knew something about it. They would check the records of Fairfax County and just pay the back taxes for ten or fifteen years, which wasn't much then. Maybe six dollars a year.

That belonged to the Belle Haven Country Club where the Towne Houses are. And in my opinion, I'd say that's how the country club got it because I got a couple lots of it even as late as I came along.

They made a trade with us so they could complete the golf course and have it all on one side.

The golfers used to come in and get beer. They made the rounds, came through to those last two holes, and the caddies would come in, one of the older caddies, and buy beer. The guys would sit out under these two huge Pin Oak trees and drink the beer, and then make those two holes. Pretty soon there'd be some more come by.

Dodson

I moved into this area roughly 40 years ago. My father, grandfather and myself used to take walks together on Saturday and Sunday afternoon. We would go down what they now call North Kings Highway where Mount Eagle was located and there were four forts down there. They were associated with the Civil War: Ft. Lyon, Ft. O'Roarke, Ft. Weed, and Ft. Farnsworth. When I was a kid, Telegraph Hill was called Ft. Lyon Hill after the fort. Since then they have built Fairhaven, and Fort Drive came through where Ft. O'Roarke was located.

These forts were in the Defensive District of Washington and they were primarily to defend the railroads from the Confederates. The forts also gave them protection of Telegraph Road and the Gravel Road, as it was called. Ft. Lyon was constructed by the sixteenth New York infantry after the battle of Bull Run. The troops were quartered at Spring Bank Manor, where the K-Mart is located today. Spring Bank Manor was the property of George Mason, who was a relative of the prominent George Mason in Virginia history. That was the only place where the troops could get water and supplies. The entire area was wooded.

Being a student of the Civil War and also a relic hunter, I've hunted the areas where the forts are and I've recovered Civil War related artifacts. Some of them were definitely tied to New York, some to the Massachusetts units that were stationed there and some from Rhode Island. The guns were manned by the Rhode Island light artillery unit.

There's still earthworks at Mt. Eagle, which is Doc Fifer's old homestead. The latest big discovery was during the construction of Hayfield High School where they unearthed two Union soldiers.

One point that a lot of people don't know is that Telegraph Road was the main road in this area. It ran from Alexandria to Richmond. The road was patrolled daily by the Federals and they would camp along Telegraph Road, a lot of times at Pohick Church itself. If you visit Pohick Church today look in the brickwork and the concrete, because there's a lot of names and units carved in there which date back to the Civil War era.

The artifacts I find range anywhere from the common three ring Union bullet, which many people call the minnie ball, to haversack hooks, bayonets, scabard tips, and belt buckles. I recovered belt buckles out of the yard next door. I guess in this yard and the yard next door, I've taken in over 200 bullets.

The topographical maps made during the Civil War show the entrenchments and they also show the picket outposts that were located in this particular area. When I was a kid, when the back was plowed up, you'd walk along and you'd find maybe one or two bullets.

As far as actual combat in this area locally, there was none.

Fort Willard was in the defense of Washington. Of course it's located over in Willard's Circle in Belle Haven. When I was a kid we used to cut across in what was Dripping Springs in order to get to Belle Haven. It was a natural spring used by the men stationed at Fort Willard plus O'Roarke which was up on the hillside about where the Holiday Inn is located today. Ft. Lyon was the biggest of the three forts. Its primary purpose was to protect Telegraph Road and the Orange and Alexandria railroad which was your main line west at that line and also Duke Street which was your main East-West road in and out of Alexandria.

It's (the Groveton area) come a long way. Among the most renowned landmarks used to be the Penn Daw Motel. It was run by Cooper Dawson Sr., then by Cooper Dawson, Jr. I guess the thing that made me remember it the most was their great grandfather was General Sam Cooper of the Confederate Army and that sort of tied it in a little more than others. At the present time there's a man across the street, Tom Rodes. He was telling me that his great, great uncle was General Emmett Rodes who was also in the Confederate Army. He fought in the battle of Winchester in 1864. The area is very historic.

When they went to tear down Spring Bank Manor, when they built K-Mart, it was said that the steps were from the old capitol that was burned by the British in 1812. The steps were saved and brought down here. The local residents were trying to save Spring Bank Manor as an historic place.

Eichelberger

You remember when Jeanie Beard was here? About two years ago, she put on a program for the Civic group. She's head of the Isis Center over in Silver Spring. When she came to the front door she said the first thing she saw, the first thing that struck her, were three spirits on the stairway. Needless to say I was already getting packed to leave. But she said not to worry about it because if they put up with you this long, they evidently like you, or they would really make it rough for you.

But strange things do happen here occasionally. Rose and I were sitting up in the living room one night about two months ago. The dog has this little rubber elephant she plays with all the time. Rose was sitting on the couch. I was sitting on the chair. Both of us were reading. The dog was laying over in the far corner sleeping, and this elephant was lying right below the coffee table. Nobody else was in the room. Cats

were out. All at once this elephant just took off. It went from the living room, just like somebody had thrown it, clean out through the hallway, and bounced off the dining room wall. Of course it startled us. Various little things like that.

Seem to have the strangest things happen up in the third floor, those bedroom areas where the kids sleep. Things fall off the dresser. Pick 'em up, and put 'em back on, and ten minutes later they're back on the floor again. It's really strange. But as far as the ghosts riding around the house on horses, I haven't seen nothing like that. Course, I haven't looked too often either. Little strange things like that, nothing really to scare you.

Summer interns and one full landscaping crew stayed here about a year before the county remodeled this place. I guess they had a rough time of it really. Mr. Queary, the foreman who was staying here, was using the library as a bedroom. The interns were staying in the basement where the big stone fireplace is located. Well I understood that the interns after a while wouldn't stay here, it spooked them too bad. Also, I guess these spirits or ghosts, whatever they may be, really gave Mr. Queary a hard time, because he finally had to give it up. He couldn't stay here any longer. I don't really know. But they swore up and down it was true.

Well, the whole area was an encampment, in defense of Washington. I found about a half dozen Miné balls in the woods. As a matter of fact, I found one right out here in the back yard. You know the southern ridge? We hunted over there one day at Kingsbrooke. We came across an old Civil War camp site; where they had the fire, the ashes from the fire and pieces of the old terra cotta beer bottles. Underground, buried of course.

When they put the new sewer line out back, they dug down about, oh, anywhere from 6 to 8 feet. In the colonial days, of course, everybody had a trash pit. They'd fill it up and cover it over and dig another one. We came upon an old trash pit out here; dug right through it, and got quite a few pieces of the old china; the white with the blue painting on it.

I ran into an old lady at a wedding here one day, and as soon as she walked in here, she knew the place was familiar. She looked around and told me she used to come down here as a girl. Senator LaFollette from Wisconsin owned this house at one time, but he never lived here; he just played around with it. This lady's Aunt and Uncle lived here as caretakers, and she was telling me all about the place as she remembered it. Of course it was just this center part standing then. But there was a large kitchen built on the back here, a one story house.

Structurally the center part of the building's got the original foundation; it's twenty-seven inches thick and made out of hand made brick and clamshell mortar. Then of course it does have the original floor joists in the basement. They're about 2½ inches wide and a full 8 inches in length. We noticed when we had this place torn apart during the remodeling on the 2nd floor there are steel H beams every four foot going across the 2nd floor to help strengthen it. The old part of the house is pretty cock-eyed because of settlement and so forth. They used the original wall studding on the house but they also reinforced it with new studding in the walls.



Stoneybrooke Mansion

In 1949, a spark from the flue set the roof on fire and burnt quite a portion of the roof off. When we had a ceiling spot off on the third floor, patching ceilings and so forth, I could see that there had been some new rafters put in. I knew at that time, of course, that there was a fire, but I had no confirmation of it until one Sunday, a fire captain from Alexandria came out here. He told me that the roof had burned in 1949.

When we first moved here, before they built the houses down at the bottom of the hill, there was deer here almost every night. And of course when they built the houses down here I guess it chased the deer down into the Huntley Meadows area. But I just saw some deer droppings about a month ago, in the snow at the playground one morning, so evidently there might be one or two strays come up here occasionally. I do know they cross South Kings Highway.

We do have a fox here that comes up at night. I haven't seen him since fall. But last summer he was coming up every night, as soon as it would get dark. He would come right up in the back yard here, up to the back porch, walk across, go down around and circle the playground, come back up out. He'd go over around and circle the tennis courts. Then he'd go down to the pavilion and snoop around there a little bit and down on in the woods. Every night it was the same path. I got him on the light a couple of times; he'd just stand there looking at me.

Probably the biggest problem they had with the whole place (Stoneybrooke), is the fire they had at the courthouse in the 1800's. Destroyed all the records. That's why they couldn't get a historic landmark for this building. They were pretty close to it, but they just couldn't quite come up with enough because the records were destroyed.

Families and Attitudes



William Randall

Randall

I used to live down top of Sherwood Lane at first, then after that to Hollin Hall. There were two farms right there together. My father worked there and that's where we lived until the time of the Spanish American War. Then we moved right up here where my brother lives at now. That's where I lived most of the time. But not a person living now was living then, outside of myself, that I know around here.

You had to go in Alexandria to get groceries, to Burrusses right on the corner, the first store in town. Wasn't no stores out here at all. Also there wasn't no post office here. You had to go to Alexandria to get your post mail. In fact, there was nothing but wagon roads. It was bad in winter time and dusty in the summer. If you went, you walked if you didn't have a mule or a horse. It was that time of horse and wagons.

There were no lights, nothing but bushes. Wasn't no house here; this was bushes. I used to live in that house there where those bushes and trees are. Time passed by. We had chickens, eggs, anything we wanted at home to eat. Far as that is concerned, eggs weren't high like they is now. You raised your own. Vegetables weren't high like they are now.

My father bought this piece of ground up there where George (his brother) lives. Now this piece of ground where I'm living was my father-in-law's. I'm married to his daughter, my second wife, Cordelia Johnson. We lived together about forty-three years.

I worked for the Electric Light Company. I worked down on the farms. I'd rather farm than do anything else I've seen done. Then you could get a job most anywhere and work, but that didn't last long. The War started going on. The war turns so many people out of the country, there wasn't anybody left.

We used to go to the dances, but we didn't do any dancing. A lot of them would come half drunk and that would stop all that. It was a pleasure at one time, but sometimes you'll be so tired when it's time to go to work next day. I wasn't doing too much cause I had to work.

I worked for the Electric Light Company, worked for the Telephone Company, and worked for the Street Car Company. All that stuff, that's hard work. I worked when they put the first lights in Arlington and Falls Church. Now look at it. It's a regular city. I got two bad bites of the light while I was going, so I got out of that.

QUESTION: We noticed the sign outside, Randall Estates. Do you still own that land?

I used to own it during Pat Johnson's time. It was left to Pat Johnson from Mrs. Mason. She lived yonder where Penn Daw is, the old building that was just across the road from Penn Daw (Spring Bank). On this side (of Route 1) was a big old house used to be George Mason's headquarters. His wife owned this piece of ground. He (Johnson) was his (Mason's) coach man, you see, carrying him back and forth from the doctor's. Mason said, "I might leave you something when I die." Doc French heard him.

Doc French said, "You try to get that out of him. Now he done said he was gonna give you something. You see what it is by the time I come back again."

He had it wrote, a note. Quander School wasn't over there yonder, that land Mason was going to give right over to him. But he (Johnson) didn't know no different till after Mason was dead. Mason, after he died, you know, his son took over. "No, we can't give you some down there (Quander Road area)," he told Johnson.

"Mrs. Mason, *You* give me my ten acres. I ain't comin' back."

"You can come back. I'll give you the acres off *my* plot," Mrs. Mason said.

That was the only thing that brought him back up here (to Randall Estates). They're so slick. They gave him two five acre lots that would go back to Mason at his death. In twenty years was when he found out. He said to me, "Come here. I got something to tell you. You better see about it."

I said, "Taxes are paid?"

"Yes, taxes are paid, but don't you know some of these men can come back and take that land from you and you'll be sittin' right out in the street?" He told me what to do. "You take and deed it to somebody for twelve months and have them deed it back to you. After twelve months, you can go and get a lawyer to investigate and they won't be bothering you. Deed it to your brother, George, if you want to."

So that's what I done. At that time George was a young boy who was gettin' his trade, but he run and work and got all straight in that twelve months.

In twelve months I'm going to Fairfax to get this straightened out with a Fairfax man. Why, nothing *in* Fairfax but lawyers. I was up there for a half hour for me to have this hearing. A lawyer gave him my deed, clean cut deed to that place. He read and signed it. He said, "Nobody can bother you." So that settled that. I never had any more trouble. Now I've been living here ever since.

QUESTION: Do you remember the depression?

Depression, oh yeah, I know a lot about that. Depression is as bad as it is now. The things weren't as high as they got them now. You could raise your hogs and things, have chickens. See we can't raise no chickens here, not like that. All that's gone. The biggest change in this area? To me building all these houses here. That's the biggest change I've seen.

So that's it, I don't know what else to tell you. All those different things always against black people, just workin' hard against them.

Gallagher

They laid the concrete road (Route One) in 1918. In war time, you see, they couldn't take the stuff down to Belvoir because it would get stuck in the mud, so they had to rush a concrete road, and they did it so fast that the road ended up being a snake. That's where Snake Hill got it's name.

There was actually a lot of small farming through here, what they call truck farming, growing vegetables, taking 'em to the market, things like that. This man, Hardbower had two or three very long greenhouses. Where the old Groveton was, was Ayres farm. We used to go up and milk the cows. They'd pasturize it (the milk) there and then they'd deliver it door to door in Alexandria. They had a regular route, like a paper route.

One of the Cole boys, Chappie, was a daredevil. I grew up with him from the time I was about seven years old until I was about eighteen. He learned to fly at Beacon airfield. Both he and his brother learned to fly when they were about 16. Anyway, he took his mother up for an airplane ride in a small Piper-Cub type plane, and then he went up by himself. As I say, he was a daredevil, and he let the plane dive, couldn't pull it out, and he got killed. Eighteen years old. He was killed in 1931. He was the first playmate I ever had to die. But his brother went on to fly for Eastern, and is probably the second or third oldest pilot Eastern has today. Parker Cole. He lives down in southern Miami. When his house, on the NE corner of U.S. 1 and Popkins Lane, got torn down I sent him a card telling him they had torn down the house his father built in 1926.

His father dug a well, and we kids used to pull buckets of dirt, dump 'em, and bring 'em back. After they got the well in, they poured a concrete base layer and built the house on top of that. It was a house you could buy from Sears and Roebuck already fitted. All you had to do was put it together. The bungalow, they called 'em, an ugly looking house but modern at the time. For many years it was the rectory for St. Louis Church.

The first real restaurant, high-class anyway, was Penn Daw Hotel. But prior to that the biggest restaurant was a place called "Mother Bartletts." This was a white restaurant right in the middle of Gum Springs where Fordson Road meets Sherwood Hall Lane. That was the most dangerous curve on the whole road (Route 1) from Belvoir to Alexandria.

I remember the first time that I went sixty mph was in a 1922 Dodge. In those days tires would blow. They had only a guarantee for 8000 miles. This fellow, Capt. Richards, his wife divorced him because he was a reckless driver. This old Dodge was glass enclosed, and it wasn't safety glass then. If you ever had a wreck in that, it'd cut you to pieces. He went 60 mph in that car and that's as far as the speedometer went in those days. He might've gone faster. It was in that strip in front of the old Mt. Vernon High School. That was the big drag strip in those days. It was the straightest route from the top of Gum Springs down to Engleside. Course they weren't many cops around. There was only one policeman. His car couldn't go any faster!

Youth didn't cause any trouble in the old days. They weren't on anything. They just never bothered anybody. There weren't any hot-rodders. Bikes were the fastest things around.

It was rare for anybody from this area to go to college. People weren't so gung-ho about college. U. Va. used to be a big place to go if you had money. Kids went down there and they played sports and took music appreciation. It was strictly an aristocratic thing. Only two or three kids from around here were enrolled down there regularly. But people went to G.W. at night. I went to law school at Washington at night. I got a law degree for only \$20 a month going to school for four years at night.

Route One

The following excerpts were chosen from the document *Preliminary Plan for Lower Potomac Mount Vernon, Rose Hill, and Springfield* published by Fairfax County in February, 1975. These are official statements and comments concerning the Route 1 corridor extending through the Groveton community.

"Portions of the corridor have been significant transportation routes since pre-colonial days. Although still used as a major transportation artery, Route 1 corridor changed from a primarily national roadway when the Shirley Highway was constructed. From that point, much of the interstate traffic that had utilized Route 1 shifted to I-95, and Route 1 increasingly became a corridor for local and regional traffic.

"Today the corridor is best known as an unattractive example of strip commercial development. Despite the problems, however, the corridor has considerable opportunity for improvement.

* * *

"Retail commercial activities comprise the key land use of the corridor, including: 44 service stations, 44 restaurants, most of which provide short orders only and 'fast foods' service, 23 motels, 10 banks, 6 auto dealerships, 7 supermarkets, 8 furniture stores, 10 mobile home parks with a total of 1,712 pads, 5 car wash facilities, and a number of other businesses, ranging from Roberts Karate to Madam Gray Palm Reading.

* * *

"Residents of the area have pointed out the proliferation of identical uses and services in the area, specifically service and short order eating places. There have been instances of new service stations opening within a short distance of stations that had but recently closed from lack of business. The same pattern has been observed for eating facilities.

"While there are a few attractive individual structures in the complex area, the lack of attention to siting, signing, landscaping, and relationship to adjacent structures has resulted in an overall level of design quality that is poor. There is no conscious pattern and few desirable use relationships that are apparent to the customer. *Many management decisions are made not only outside the Route 1 corridor, but outside the Washington Metropolitan area! This pattern of control may form a major obstacle to any proposal for transformation of the area.*

* * *

"Accident Rate (Number of accidents per 1 million vehicles miles traveled)

Year	
1970	1,072
1971	1,141
1972	1,081

The import of these numbers is that a person is 3 times as liable to be killed and $4\frac{1}{2}$ times as liable to have an accident along the Route 1 corridor strip as one who is traveling on the parallel section of Interstate 95. (p. 40)

* * *

"The northern part of the corridor is affected by the extensive flood plains and stream valleys of Dogue Creek.

"Air quality is seriously affected by automobiles exhaust emissions aggravated by the start/stop traffic pattern which is so common along Route 1. Noise levels are also high because of the extensive automobile usage. (pp. 40-41) 1

"As one drives the length of Route 1 in either direction, one of the immediate perceptions is the lack of district identity; that is, to one who is not very familiar with the corridor, any one place along its length looks like any other place along its length. Service stations are repeated brand for brand; the same franchised fast food restaurants are seen at irregular intervals; and in some instances, marginal uses go in and out of business in fairly brief periods of time, with only slight remodeling of structures occurring. The clash of advertising signs in the corridor, all competing for attention of the motorist driving by, results quite predictably in a barrage of advertising structures and facilities, none of which is entirely effective in bringing the merchant's or product's name to the attention of the potential consumer. To put it simply, the eye gets confused by the mass of signs that line the road on either side. One suspects that a great deal of the cost and effort represented by this type of advertising may be not only inefficient but counterproductive." (p. 41)

Adams

The first thing this morning when I left home I had a flat tire. When I came to Gum Springs that was before the days of drop center rims. It used to be you had to change your tires just like you change some bicycle tires. Take the casing off. Pull the tube out and patch the tube and put it back. Well, that's the way all automobiles were when I first came to Gum Springs. I think the first car I came to Gum Springs in was a 1924 Studebaker and it would do about 60 miles an hour down the hill and that was new in '24.

Another noticeable change. In those days if you stood on the road looking at your tire somebody stopped to see if you'd had tire trouble. If you had your hood up, somebody stopped. Today nobody pays attention. You better not stand out in the road or you'll get run over.

There was one little two-room school when I came then. It was originally a one-room school. It sat approximately across from the drive-in theater. That little school stayed there until a new school was built in Gum Springs. It was my task, or my pleasure, or my folly, that I tore that building down about three years ago. I had lots of thoughts about how we had to twist the county school board's arms to get that school, and yet it was so inadequate! To replace it they built the Drew Smith School.

I was going to school in Richmond, but I visited the family here who were descendants of the people for whom the Drew Smith school was made, Aunt Maria Smith was the first black teacher of the community in that school.

Mrs. Gibbs was the white lady who taught the Negroes (in that day they were Negroes) in her laundry room foyer. Then, when the county did provide a school, Aunt Maria Smith was the teacher.

I came to Washington to live in about '35 or '36 and I looked for somewhere in the suburbs to buy that I could raise some chickens and a pig. I happened to drive down Number 1 and something was familiar to me. I'd actually forgotten the days I did spend there enjoying the pear trees and the apple trees and the cherry trees down on the old Smith farm. Pines were all growing in the road way, but I found the old house, the well, the old root cellar where food was kept in the winter. It brought back very fond memories of a very good childhood. That farm is where the Drew Smith school is and the Martin Luther King Jr. Park.

Up the road was the Kirk Wilkinson farm, a gentleman farm. Most of the people in Gum Springs worked around on those farms. They were dairy farms. They were the principal supply of the city of Alexandria's milk and some went into Washington.

There wasn't any time to fight; everybody had to work too hard to survive. The blacks in the area worked for the whites and there were practically no poor whites. I think that racial strife comes from competition for the same jobs.

The Wilkinson mansion was a big gentleman farm. They didn't have to farm for money. Negroes who did domestic work were hired by the Wilkinson Mansion. It was just like a pre-war plantation except the Wilkinsons were very generous and very kind people. They figured out the logic and were generous. The other neighbors were just as fine people, I think but they just didn't have anything to express it with.

There might be a couple of boys fighting about some apples or fish or things boys fight about, but they would get a thrashing by the first man who came by. He'd whip both of them and send them home and tell them, "I'm gonna tell your daddy." That was what they really feared, because when he told your daddy and your daddy worked you over you didn't want to fight anymore for a long time. That was discipline to us.

The law of the county was on the other side. We had a sheriff that had an old A model Ford. When you ran all the way out to Fort Hunt Road or to the Wilkinsons to get to a telephone to tell the sheriff there was a disturbance; by the time you ran out there, called the sheriff and he drove down here—why if there was a murder the body would have been buried!

In early days if anybody thought it was necessary to call the Sheriff, citizens took the responsibility and they told what they knew. Later they had developed and there was no need for the Sheriff to come, and when he got there nobody knew anything.

Route 1 was macadam when I first started to travel it. Gum Springs was right on Number 1 in those days. When Mr. Roosevelt became president, one of his first WPA projects was to straighten Number 1 out. At the intersection of Sherwood Hall and Route 1 there was no straight road that ran through. Route 1 went through Gum Springs and came back up at the Belle Haven Lodge. It went from behind McDonalds by the Post Office then it looped over across the present Route 1 and went down into

the valley. Because horses couldn't pull wagons up Snake Hill, they had to wind around the hill.

Wherever there was poor folks and unlearned folks there was the ghost stories. There was stories of local folklore about the Civil War participants. Mt. Vernon was sympathetic with the Union side of the Civil War. A Miss Pruitt was in charge of the estate at that time. She was hiding out Union spys and Union army and that same Miss Pruitt kept the money from the Burke and Herbert Bank, hidden away in Mt. Vernon. Whenever she had a chance, she took it into Washington by horse and buggy in a large egg basket covered with eggs. She had to tell some lie about taking them to somebody in Alexandria until she got past Alexandria. After she got past the Confederate line she said she was taking them in to the President. "The President's sick and he needs fresh eggs and I'm taking them to him." So the Union lines let her through into Washington and she switched the money. Colonel Burke and Captain Herbert had left it in her care while they left in the war. She deposited it in Riggs Bank (in Washington).

Confederate money was worth nothing, absolutely nothing. So when Colonel Burke and Captain Herbert came back they had money on deposit with Riggs in Washington. That's why Burke and Herbert used to be called the oldest bank in the old dominion.

The most notable change that the county has experienced I think is in schools. Groveton High is now a campus. High schools used to be a school building on a little lot. There was no parking. Nobody had any cars—the teachers, the principal, nobody. We didn't have any school bus. There were no baseball teams with schools. The boys just went out and played in a field. So you see, we have overcome the old "grass roots" that I remember!

When we first prepared to pass a 10 million dollar school bond issue, people said, "How are we ever going to pay 10 million dollars off in school bonds? We can't do it. We're a county of poor people, farmers, and we can't. I was temporarily living in Alexandria at the time. They came in town and got me and said, "Why don't you come and help us campaign?" I rigged up the first sound truck that I knew anything about to do campaigning with. I got people who knew how to hook up a speaker and mike and I went down through Gunston, a black man campaigning among all the whites down there. I talked with a person and then I got on the sound truck. We must have persuaded them for the county to change its pattern. We cannot stay in the shadow of the Capitol.

Fairfax County never really did have marginal land; it was sub-marginal. Somebody said that George Washington became a politician because he couldn't make a living on the land. That's what we were saying. Our children were going to have to be employees of the federal government, going to have to go into the service industries because agriculture is not Fairfax County's thing.

We got that bond through and built schools like Drew Smith, modern brick schools with sanitary facilities. We didn't have to go out to the old stinking john anymore and they didn't get water out of an unsanitary well. We began to pay teachers a more respectable wage and we saw the return. Our children became brighter and more enlightened and as soon as they were finished with school they were getting jobs.

Stokes

There wasn't nothing down here, nothing but woods. All that was woods clean to Fort Hunt Road. Nothing but a dirt road all the way through here. That was about 40 or 50 years ago.

I built a couple of houses over here. The state built a house there at the road and we put electricity in it, but it didn't have no water or nothing like that. It had all outside toilets.

QUESTION: What are the biggest changes in this area since you've been living here?

The gas lines, sewer lines, water lines. You got a big nice school. We didn't have but a one room school. There wasn't much work or money, of course, things were cheap. You didn't need too much money. What little bit you had you made out with.

My daddy, he worked on the railroad. Some of them worked on farms. This whole area wasn't nothing but a farm, just very few houses on it. I did a lot of work around home, but I started out working when I was 13. I used to work for this guy; he had a farm, it was James Quander and Robert Quander.

QUESTION: Can you tell us about the Springbank Inn?

Springbank was a beer garden on the other side of the road, but little kids weren't allowed in there unless they stole in there to get a beer.

When I was a little boy, I was scared of water. They used to take me out and throw me in the boat and go off near the bridge, drop a net halfway out in the river. I used to help to pull it in. They used to give us all the little fish that we could catch. The big ones they used to take and sell.

I was scared of snakes. One day I seen a little snake and I guess I walked almost a half a mile going all the way around to keep from coming back (the same way). I seen a snake last summer over at Mason Hill. I had been working and I seen this black snake laying across. I was getting ready to get a stick and kill him and I happend to tell the lady and she went there talking to him and I haven't seen him since!

I didn't play too much of anything but a little checkers because when you was coming up during that time you had a whole lot of work to do. You didn't have a lot of time. When I was out of school we had to can and take care of the hogs. We had to cut wood and stuff like that. We had a well. We had a hand pump to pump it out of there. Each individual house had a pump. They used to have a big tank up in the attic. They used to pump the water from the basement up in the attic and the water would come down through the pipes. You had to heat it on the stove.

QUESTION: How many people were in your family?

My family? Ten. We used to fight. They used to whip me one day and I tell my momma that night and they would kill me the next day.

Arnold

Have you heard this story of the bonus marchers that came to Washington in 1932? The bonus marchers, they were veterans of World War I and the government had promised them this money, bonus money.

They kept puttin' 'em off and puttin' 'em off. I think Hoover was president at that

time, MacArthur was in charge of the army, and I think Eisenhower had a part in it too at that time. Well, anyway, they chased 'em out of Washington 'cause they'd camped on the monument grounds.

They all came down here. They were all really, really pitiful. They brought the families with 'em and they had these old cars, just like Okies. They came here for that money and things were bad and they would demand it. They didn't get it that time, they got a little bit later on.

We took 'em in. Had to feed them, 'cause they were in really bad shape. We used to have to keep 'em for two or three weeks, then we'd get another bunch. But people were like that in those days. They'd take anybody in, help 'em and feed 'em, but you don't see a lot of that today.

Barnes

Fairhaven was the first housing project that was built in this area. Up until that time people would build one house here and one house there. But they came in and took that area of Fairhaven and they set up a mill. They made those houses in the mill and brought them down in sections and nailed them up.

Mantiplay

QUESTION: Have you noticed any changes in the area since you've been living here?

MR. MANTIPLY: Well, the A and P has been built, the Fairhaven Arco has been built. The Pizza Villa has been built. The houses, a lot of them are getting old and a lot of the older people have moved out. A colored family has moved in next door. The 7-11 down on Fairhaven Avenue has been built, and that's been a problem ever since it's been open. The palm readers down on Fairhaven—they moved in. A lot of the houses need some repair. Younger people moved in, and things are so high nowadays you know, that a lot of them don't have any money to do it.

This was the first model home in this community (Fairhaven) and it's been here from around the early 40's. When I first moved here it was \$12,000, and when they were first built I understand there were maybe \$4,000 or \$5,000. Now they're selling in the range from 35 to 40 thousand, some of them are getting 47 thousand.

I have to pay taxes in this area, and have been for twenty years, and I haven't got a sidewalk so far, I haven't got a drainage system like I should have. But definitely I think that we should get some of these things without tying ourselves up with the county or the government or anything else because we pay taxes the same as everybody else.

I drove a bus for A, B and W right down Number 1 highway. In the last 25, 30 years this whole thing was built up with all these restaurants and gas stations and shopping centers. It was only one lane on each side up until they started building this part of it. It wasn't a week that went by there wasn't about four, five and six (wrecks) and sometimes two and three a night. We've had a couple people killed on motorcycles right out in front of the house. A colored fellow that lived on Quander Road got killed right out in front here.

MRS. MANTIPLY: I'm a director at the Community Center at Fairhaven here. I don't attend every meeting because some nights I have to work. We have one a month. We have get togethers. The teen center, they had that for a while, and then I think the teenagers, some of them got a little out of place or something. They were misbehaving. I think there's much of that going on now in the world. They have bingo on Monday nights. We also have church services.

MR. MANTIPLY: They also have dances every once and a while like New Year's Eve. They have holiday parties for the kids. It really does a good job, I mean, it's active and people can participate in it. But we only get twenty to thirty people out of 200. It takes a lot out of just a few.

MRS. MANTIPLY: It used to be back in years past, we learned to know everybody and Christmas time we would have parties. We'd go to each other's houses. All night long we'd be up sometimes you know, just oodles of people would gather. Course you just don't get to know people now. Well, you know 'em when you see 'em, but you just don't get together like we used to.

MR. MANTIPLY: Every Saturday night it was something. And, you know, it just changed. I think it's a part of the country, all around here. I bought a CB now. I talk to a lot of people that I don't even know. You know I haven't even seen 'em before, but I do talk to 'em and we enjoy talkin'. Maybe I'll get to know 'em.

MRS. MANTIPLY: At one time these houses were gonna be sold commerical. Everybody was kind of upset, but that's been years ago, and it's just all died down.

MR. MANTIPLY: At one time they wanted to buy this house commerical. They wanted to put a beauty parlor here.

I have a problem right here because in front of my house there's a storm sewer, but that storm sewer does not belong to Fairfax.

MRS. MANTIPLY: It belongs to the state.

MR. MANTIPLY: Back a few years ago I had to get the Health Department to come down, and get in to open the drain because it was stopped and there was stagnated water around my house as much as 12 inches.

MRS. MANTIPLY: We found out it was the state's when it stopped up, with all that stagnated water—flies, and bugs, and there was trash and all in it. You could imagine what it would look like. We called the county. They said that they didn't have nothin' to do with it, and to call the state. We called the state. They said they had nothin' to do with it, it belongs to the county. We couldn't get between either one of the two, so we just called the Health Bureau. I mean it wasn't two hours before they came out and unstopped it.

MR. MANTIPLY: It's fine now ever since then.

Hecox

When I came out here there wasn't a whole lot going on. There wasn't a whole lot to even tell you about because there wasn't much here. The only thing a person did was get on a bus in Alexandria and go to Fort Belvoir where all the activity was.

The open air theater, had been very active until the war started and they closed it down. In January 1944 they opened it again. Everybody flocked to it. If you didn't get there real early you never got in, and cars would line up a mile back, trying to get in.

One of the places you could get something to eat was right across the road, called "Twin Barrels." Now that's exactly what they looked like—two huge barrels hooked together. One end of it was his kitchen and the other part was where he served. The theater didn't have popcorn and candy because there wasn't any. All that stuff was rationed. The man with the "Twin Barrels" had the closest to a little restaurant. They've got a big service station and car wash there now.

The Harmony House, trailer Court, was there at this time. They made all their money during the war when nobody had a place to live, and anybody that had extra room made premium rates. There was many service men that had to take their families with them because they had no place at home.

That was the beginning of some of this federal housing, and one was Fairhaven. The most expensive house there, the very nicest one, was only \$3,000.

Along the Route 1 corridor there were about six green houses. In back of the open air theater was Ladson's, or Green Acres, and they raised flowers there in a field way. I lived back there for six months in a little tiny house.

In back of where the Shell station is built now, was a place called the Community House. They had rooms and you could rent one. It had a community kitchen and all kinds of kettles and dishes. You could stay there for \$3 a night which was outrageously high. We stayed there two nights. To get into the kitchen to cook was strictly out of this world because you had to carry water in. There was no plumbing, no inside facilities. The lady that lived in the house was kind enough to let everybody have water from her outside faucet. But you had to use the little house behind the big house for anything else.

That's, I think, an original "commune" the way I understand it! Just one big room and all together. Most of the rooms had your bed, dresser, and chairs or a davenport, and a table.

You could find housing in Maryland, everybody always thought the Virginia side was swampy. There just wasn't a place where anybody could build. When the war ended people wanted to buy homes. They had money to put down. Finally, a man named Gosnell decided that it was profitable for everybody, including him, to begin to fill that ground or buy a hill. Jefferson Manor was the first to be built. If you've ever been over there you'll know how small they are, but at that time it was a godsend because people just didn't have a place to live.

When we first moved into our house (we live over in Bucknell Heights) we were what you call country. You never dreamed that anyone could build on it because it was very steep. The thing was terraced down and we got Bucknell Heights!

Belle Haven and New Alexandria was built for the VIP's. At that time there were a lot of "dollar a year" men. That is people that had factories and big farms, people that had a lot of money and could afford to take time off to work for a dollar a year for the government. A lot of senators and representatives and cabinet members lived there. The purpose of it was to give them a comparable home to what some of them in D.C. had, and also to give them a club they could have without having to go so many miles away. They were also the first ones to get complete inside plumbing facilities.

When my boys went to school there was only eleven grades. When they were first getting ready to graduate, they put in a twelfth grade so he (my oldest son) had to go to school one year longer than he intended.

There wasn't much that wasn't rationed and that that wasn't rationed didn't matter. There was rationing on coffee, meat, fresh vegetables, canned vegetables—you had to have stamps for them. Sugar, gasoline, oil—you could buy so many quarts of oil to so many gallons of gasoline. And there was no way under the sun you could get extra stamps, unless you had somebody that was sick and had to make extra trips to the doctor. There had to be a good reason, let's put it that way. The stamps looked just like our green stamps today. Soap was in very limited supply, but it wasn't rationed. The store rationed it. I happened to work at Safeway during that time. The regular customers and the employees was allowed to have certain items.

In order to buy groceries you had to go into Alexandria. Chauncey's was in Alexandria and they had that store and also one that's a rug place now on Route 1. They stayed there quite a while and I don't know why they left.

All of the streets were originally carriage routes and all of them led into Alexandria like the spokes of a wheel. Route 1 was paved to transport missiles from Ft. Belvoir to the missile sites which ringed the whole D.C. area. I think there are still some of the sites around, if you just go looking. Burgundy Village has one. The government sees to it that the D.C. area has got complete protection.

I'm not a southerner. I come from the west, Nebraska, and we have a philosophy—when it's no good get rid of it and build it new. The only thing you use the past for is to learn from.

We came to Virginia and found the Civil War was still fought here. The people were still arguing the Civil War. And if anybody said anything about it, the answer, was, "Well, you didn't have a grandmother or aunt or uncle or somebody in the family there." Well, that's true, I didn't. The schools opened, the restaurants were opened, the theaters were opened. Nobody ever said anything if "they" went into a store or restroom with you. "They" were people; we grew up that way. One of the best friends I had when I was in high school was a colored girl. We had three years together. Nicer person you never knew.

When you come here, the whole atmosphere was different. I had to learn to keep my mouth shut. My husband got up on the bus one day and let a woman (black) who was holding a baby have his seat. I thought they was going to kick us off the bus. Truly, people were as mad as hornets that he did that and then he held the baby. That made it doubly insulting!

Bartels

In 1963 we lived on Kenyon Drive in Bucknell Manor. Then we moved here, but when we moved here, I went to Vietnam. My wife and children came here to Hybla Valley. I am, right now, in the A.M.C. building over on Eisenhower Avenue by Cameron Station, Department of the Army Internal Readiness and Development Committee.

QUESTION: Are there any disadvantages or advantages for you and your family moving all over the country?

I think they like it. I think it has an advantage cause everybody gets to learn about people and other parts of the United States and other parts of the world. It teaches them, particularly children, to adjust to moving around when they become older.

QUESTION: When your family left Hybla Valley, where did they move?

In 1970 we moved to Indiana. Then we went to California, then we went to Iran, then we came back here.

Many of the stores that we used to deal with weren't around any more or they had moved to new locations. When we left here, the area was very clean, particularly Alexandria, and they advertised themselves as being the cleanest city in America and they *were* one of the cleanest I ever saw, but the situation is not the same anymore. Many of the people don't seem to be paying as much attention to their front yards as they used to.

QUESTION: When you retire, do you plan on living in this area?

No, either overseas, or wherever I get a job.

QUESTION: Are you able to get involved with the community?

Well, it depends on where you're at and how long you're going to be there and also the attitude that the civilian population has.

QUESTION: Has the military in this area increased in the past few years?

No, it has not increased in numbers. In fact, it is decreasing. The government is making an effort to keep the number down rather than allow it to increase.

QUESTION: How long will you be living in Hybla Valley?

Until June or July, because I retire at that time.

Quan and Vuong

NANCY QUAN: We came from Vietnam. We are citizens of Vietnam. But we're not Vietnamese, we are Chinese.

TOM VUONG: A lot is different, different classes, teachers, and students.

NANCY: School is freer over here than over there. Here there is freedom of speech, freedom of religion. It's better than Vietnam, much better. For example you can smoke over here, but over there you can't smoke in school.

TOM: Over there you couldn't have couples. I like this school the best. Over there you can't do anything. You can't talk to your teacher, sit on the tables, or things like that.

NANCY: I like Big Macs better than hamburgers. I like pizza. It is so delicious. We have four kinds of food in Vietnam, there's French, Vietnamese, Chinese, and U.S. food. We also have Cokes, Sprites, Orange, and every kind of soda.

In Vietnam we wear hippy dresses, skirts, and hot pants. No jeans, but we do have the jean jackets.

TOM: Over there when you go shopping you don't have to drive one or two miles, you just walk. Everything is close together. We don't drive very much. If you need to take the bus somewhere it just takes about twenty minutes. Also a lot of people ride motorcycles. They ride motorcycles in Vietnam like people drive cars in the United States. Every family has two or three motorcycles. Rich people usually have the cars, but they also have motorcycles.

NANCY: The music is the same in Vietnam, we have slow songs and sweet songs. Our songs are sung in different languages: Vietnamese, Chinese, and English. We have such songs as "Love Story," and "Love is Blue."

Over there we go to school. We learn English, and Chinese. I speak four languages: Chinese, Vietnamese, English, and Mandarin. We take History, Geography, Math, English, and Chinese. We don't choose what we want.

TOM: In Vietnam my father was a dentist. When he came over here he tried to become a dentist, but they said, "If you want to become a dentist over here, you must go to school for six years." My father thinks that the time is too long. So my father decided to be a T.V. and radio repairman, because it only takes one year of school. T.V. and radios are also very easy for him, because he learned about them in Vietnam. He is finished with his one year of school, and is now looking for a job.

Allen

My parents and I moved out to Bucknell Heights in June or July of 1959 and I've lived here about 18, 19 years. I'm an alumnus of the school and now treasurer of the Groveton High School Boosters and that is my basic involvement, but I have a great love and a great belief in the young people of today.

I started at the first G. H. S. of Popkins Lane in Spetember of 1959. We had a fantastic basketball team. We were undefeated in Fairfax County play for I believe 32 or 33 straight games. That was back in the time when Northern Virginia was divided into Fairfax County, Arlington County, and Alexandria City. We could beat everybody but it seems like when we played the powerhouse, Washington and Lee, over in Arlington, we'd always come away on the lower end of the score.

I remember the days when Stoneybrooke was a mansion and lots of vacant fields and when Beacon Mall and the apartments up there were an airport and a neat place to go driving cars and just hiding out and doing things. I remember when Fort Hunt High School wasn't there! All the area down there was woods. The biggest change is in the continued development. I remember when I was just a little kid riding my bicycle from Alexandria down to Bucknell Heights (it must have been about 1955) and Route 1 was a four lane road at best and there wasn't much traffic. The Dixie Pig was still where it is now, but there weren't so many people out here.

Believe it or not, I liked it when the airplanes used to come in over my house on the final approach to Beacon Field, and Popkins Farm was truly a farm, but we've kept pace with the rest of the nation and we've grown and things have gotten better in the way of services provided by the county, and things to do. But I still kind of yearn for the old days when you didn't have to fight a major traffic tie-up just to get across Route One at Beacon Hill Road.

My basic philosophy on today's youth is that all the youth are good and they're where it's at. The youth of today are tomorrow, they're the future. I think some people get high on drugs and alcohol. I get high on working with young people, that's my emotional high.

When we were growing up and going to G.H.S. we used to go over to Mount Comfort Cemetery and we'd play football and hit golf balls. One night we were camped out and we saw what we thought were ghosts. We weren't really quite sure. We used to run on the grave sites at Mt. Comfort Cemetery and I suppose we rattled a few of the people up, and they'd come up to get us one night.

Stoops

Well, the youth today, there isn't very much change from when I was a youth, except that youth today have more freedom than children had when I was young. We had gangs that hung around on the corners. If you went out of your jurisdiction around in the neighborhood into some other neighborhood where you didn't belong, you were worked over. If you had a bike they'd take the bike away from you, tear it up or hide it. The youth today, I can't see is much different. The youth today has more advantages than the youth of my time. The youth in my day went out to learn a trade. Today, very few of them want to learn a trade. They are going into more academic courses which I can't blame 'em, to get out of the hard work. I haven't anything against the youth today.

Washington

George Washington was my fifth great-uncle. The first Bushrod Washington was a Justice of the United States Court. He was appointed by John Adams. The Washington family originally started out west in Williams County, a little south of where Lee's home is. I went to high school in Pennsylvania and lived near Valley Forge. I've been in this area since 1939.

When we first moved here we had to get used to the airplanes. We could stand in the kitchen and watch the planes. Some came very close. The first one we saw, I dove for the floor. One fellow that lived over in the Groveton area had had it with the planes flying over his house, so he went into his house, got his shot gun and took a few punches at them.

Years ago when driving from Washington to Richmond we thought this was out in the country. It's really changed quite a lot. We used to go up to Popkins farm. It was real countrified. There was a farm down the road where the school (Bryant) is now, with chickens and pigs. We have seen changes.

I think it's important to get the history of your area. Everybody in the area has a big advantage as far as libraries and historical places go. It's an ideal place to go to school. Writing about the past history of this area, you must salvage the best things and apply them to the future.

Jobs

Anderson: psychiatrist

We consider a generation about 20 years. Generations go through the same kinds of things in growing up. Kids that are growing up 30 years ago faced the same problems that kids growing up today face. What has changed are the external things; social life, transportation, and knowledge, technological and scientific knowledge. But in just growing up kids have the same kinds of problems and have had for centuries.

There are a lot of community things that hold the community together, a lot of community spirit. Groveton has that quality to it. Something about this area reminds you of a small town. In the way the community grows up, the neighborhood kids, the neighborhood school—it's very much like growing up in a small town.

The younger generation is great. They're going through the same sort of things that everyone goes through and their ability to handle the problems as they face them is good. I recognize that some of them are having difficulties. This would happen anytime.

What has happened to Route 1 is that it has to be more of a corridor that leads people through and traffic has increased a great deal. Shopping areas have opened up the last 15 years. It's made us less dependent on downtown. The changes on Route 1 have been able to bring the community functions closer to the people here.

QUESTION: Do you feel families are drawing apart from each other?

There are instances of it. But I don't think that the percentage is any higher than is any other time. Times the family really was not in touch was in time of war. Historically that's the time when families are really torn apart, either the Second World War or the Korean War or those who were affected by the Vietnam War.

Now the other kinds of things that keep families apart are domestic. They are thinking of divorce now, or separation because of marital difficulties. There is more of it nationwide and it filters down to this community. I don't think it is a good thing, but I don't think this area is any worse than some of the other areas in the country.

I remember at Groveton when we had programs in the SPTA on drugs and the biggest outcry, of course, was about pot. How very upset everyone was about it, especially

the parents! Now most parents are not that upset by pot, but there was certainly a time when it was a very touchy issue. It was very difficult for parents and school officials to understand just what to do about it. If you discovered somebody using it, did that mean they had serious sociological problems or did that mean they were going to go into hard drugs and become addicted? It's settled down to the point where parents and teachers realize that it's the type of individual that uses drugs that you have to be concerned about. Somebody that's using drugs is turning to drugs as a way of answering or dealing with their insecurities in a way that they don't have to face up to them.

We should consider alcohol as being probably a much bigger problem than the other drugs. Of things that are abused, alcohol is certainly the greatest. It has been and probably will be and is a more serious problem in this area than other drugs.

If the father is alcoholic it makes a lot of difference to the family. If someone of the family, the kids, are caught experimenting with drugs, then that affects the family. If there are users in the family we can say that some individuals of the family unit are not coping with their problems very well.

I'm saying there have always been family problems and there always will be family problems because these are problems of growing up and living together. Families are more mobile than they ever have been. We are mobile around here because of the high percentage of military and government workers. It used to be when a family grew up, a grandfather and grandmother on both sides were in the same town, or the son grew up on a piece of land and he stayed right next to dad and got a family and raised it. There are still communities in this country where people live and die in the same community, but that's not true in this area. I'm sure you have a hard time finding people that spend all their life here.



Formerly Pat's Market

Arnold: storekeeper

QUESTION: Tell us about the armed robber.

MR. ARNOLD: The lunch rush was over and I was gettin' ready to paint the floor. This joker came in, had on this V.F.W. jacket, Veterans of Foreign War. And I was back by the meat case stirrin' this paint. I wasn't gonna get any more business until the school kids got out of school at 3:00, that'd be the next busy period.

He was awful friendly, "Hi old timer, ol' buddy," and all that jive they like to hand ya. And then I'd never seen him before and I just figured right then that this guy's too friendly.

I had this money in my pocket. It was two or three hundred dollars, so I took it out. And where the original meatcase was, I just threw it in there 'cause I was in the back. He had pulled around that side by the townhouses. I didn't see the durn car there. So he run on out and went around the side. And I just stood there and had a funny feeling and boy, next thing I know here comes three of 'em in the door.

One of 'em got out in front of me, he had this durn hood on his head. He was real soft talkin' and he said, "All right, this is a holdup." Got his gun in there and he got hung up in his jacket. He was pullin' it in and pullin' it in, he finally got it out and laid it on me. And he said, "Put your hands up," so I put my hands up.

What was I gonna do, I was gonna give him the money. Let him have it out of the drawer rather than him tearing the cash register up where I would have to buy another one. He said, "NO, no get out of there." And I started to walk out from behind it.

There was this other one, he had a gun and his handkerchief tied over his face. He put that gun on me and this other one he was in front of me. He put his gun upside my head and made me lay down on the floor back there. Took my own rope, clothesline, I sold clothesline, clothespins and everything. And he tied me up in one minute flat, and of course I helped him. I didn't fight him! He had my hands tied up and my feet drawn up behind my head and he had me tied up just like you'd throw a steer and then tie him up.

There was another one in there, he's the one that went through the cash register and took all the money. I had a coin collection, they took that. And the funny thing about it. I had money in my billfold. And he touched my pocket, that billfold one time or another he must of touched me a hundred times, and he didn't take that durned thing out. So that helped me to get out of the store business. They didn't get the \$300 I threw in the back, but I had about \$160 in the cash register and the coin collection. Oh yeah, and I had a gun that one of the customers got for me but I never got to use it.

MRS. ARNOLD: He just laid there on the floor until—

MR. ARNOLD: The mailman came along and untied me! Then the police came down but they never caught 'em. That was 'bout 1965. It was a year and a half after that, that I left the business and leased the building.

Brown: lawyer

I've been involved in a number of legal matters in Northern Virginia. For example, I handled the case that went to the Supreme Court about ten years ago which resulted in the Virginia Poll Tax being held unconstitutional as a condition of voting. The

Supreme Court held that the poll tax discriminates against the poor people who couldn't afford to pay the tax. There were families in this area, in fact, the Burr family who live right next to the school over here on Quander Road, who were plaintiffs on the case.

I also handled the case that went to court about the segregated seating law that required blacks and whites to sit in different parts of theatres or auditoriums. We succeeded in getting that held unconstitutional.

I handled most of the litigation that resulted in the Fairfax County Schools being desegregated. It was a little over ten years ago that there was a segregated school system in this county and in 1959 we started the first law suit to bring about desegregation. That was five years after the Supreme Court decided the Brown case. The county hadn't done anything, but we began a process that took several years of litigation and community effort.

I also represented the parents of two black families that brought suit against private schools. It resulted last spring in the Supreme Court decision holding that private schools may not discriminate on the basis of race.

I've been a lawyer about 27 years. I work in labor, civil rights, civil liberties, and also I've been involved in community activities and community life here in northern Virginia. It has been a fact that public facilities (in black neighborhoods) have been neglected ever since the Civil War. Black people lived in one part of town and white people lived in another part. Martin Luther King said one time you could tell where the black part of town was in a southern community, because that is where the pavement stopped. That is really the way the situation has been in Fairfax County. The small black developments that are around the county have existed for many years from the days when the county was rural. Roads in the black communities, places like Gum Springs, have been in rather bad shape and a source of concern for a rather long time.

We brought suit to pave the roads and provide proper drainage in the black communities of the county. In 1972 we obtained an agreement that the county would pave some 75 roads in black communities over a three year period. They reneged on the agreement for a complicated legal reason and we had to go back to court and do some litigating.

We don't find some of the more direct kinds of discrimination that used to be the way we were 15 years ago in northern Virginia. Blacks do not have economic ways of getting into decent housing often times and are reluctant and concerned about hostility that they might receive. Housing is quite a problem for poor people both white and black. I'm sure you're familiar with problems in the high school, problems that people have to deal with every day and have to learn to cope with and try to understand.

Dove: fireman, mailman

At the old Penn Daw station I was the first paid fireman, and one of the first paid firemen in the area. (Since July 1, 1949). I was a volunteer at the time, and they put up the job, and they called it caretaker. When they changed to county managers form of government in 1952, they made us regular paid firemen.

The fire department had horse shows up there where Beacon Mall shopping center is now. They had horse shows and carnivals and so forth to raise money. When I first went to work at the old Penn Daw fire station, the Beacon Hill airport was still going strong. So was the one at Hybla Valley.

As far as dairy farms are concerned, Hayfield Farm down at Telegraph Road was one. Popkins Farm at the end of Popkins Lane where the Groveton High School started was originally a dairy farm. Mr. Earl Popkins, ran the dairy farm and later sold the ground off.

We used to have trucks on the Number 1 highway, cause 95 hadn't been completed yet. We had a lot of trucks on Snake Hill, and a lot of people were killed there, turning off the highway.

We had a homemade fire engine, and a homemade ambulance and we had an Old Civil Defense piece of equipment that the OCD gave us, a 1942 Chevrolet with a homemade body on it. Then we got two pieces of equipment from army surplus, a 1939 Chevrolet command car that we made an ambulance out of, and a 1936 Indiana.

Most of your wildlife was in Hybla Valley, where they built a big park. I know about 22-25 years ago, a pig truck turned over on the highway. For years they had wild pigs down there.

The young people had a dance at Groveton Elementary for 16 year olds and up. That was the only night life those young people had. The school dance was the only thing around. There was no place else to go. The area which was some 21 sq. miles, there were about 15,000 people in that area.

One of the worst fires I fought was in 1949, when I first went to work. At the corner of East Side Drive, there was two apartment houses that were made from barns, and we had a fire in there, where a lady and three children burnt up. That was probably one of the first fatal fires I ever fought as a paid fireman.

When I first started down here at the Post Office in 1942, I worked at the main office up at Washington and Prince Street. Then they opened up, I think it was 1947 or 1948 the Jefferson Manor Branch, and I was one of the first ones there. That's when we started walking from Jefferson Manor up to Groveton to the top of the big hill, then back down to Jefferson Manor.

Roughly in 21 sq. miles we covered with the Penn Daw fire department company, the population was something like 15,000. We ran fires the same way, no street numbers. "So and so's farm's on fire, second house past the oak tree." Something like that. Mostly using street names and landmarks is the way you ran your fire department.

We used to have all types of accidents on Route 1, cause motorcycles weren't too many back then. In motorcycle accidents generally people were killed. The helmet law wasn't in effect back then and they were nasty accidents, maybe 3 or 4 a year. We did have motorcycle policemen. As a matter of fact we had 2 motorcycle policemen. Groveton substation hadn't been built then.

We had people that rode horses up and down the highway. A man who lived down there, where they built the Ranch House and Lums; Mr. White, who had a jackass, he used to ride up and down the highway. We had the big riding stables down where Bucknell school is now.

We used to have what you called a Monday night clean-up, they'd blow the siren at 6:00 and we had about 45-60 volunteers then, cause there was nothing else to do. They'd all come down and clean up the firehouse and go over the equipment. The other day, I was telling some of the firemen down at the new Penn Daw that each individual crease had a crack and they used to keep the cracks in. The ambulance probably ran every day, fire trucks maybe would sit all week, and that's why we had the Monday night clean-up.

In 1942, I opened a gas station, garage at the old Groveton Texaco. I stayed there about a year, my brother-in-law bought me out and I went back to the post office, that was 1943. There was a Texaco gas station, and in the middle was a barbershop, on the end was what they called the Groveton Luncheonette, then the Groveton Market. It's vacant now but it was Chauncey's Market. Last time it was open it was a carpet shop. We weren't the original owners, it was remodeled in 1942. The trouble was, you couldn't get enough gas to sell to support two people, so we just split up. Not because we couldn't get along with it, but because we couldn't get enough gas to sell. We would have a line of people following the gas trucks. By the time he got his gas pumped, you could sell it within the next hour or so.

Vozzola: teacher

I was appointed to teach in Groveton Elementary; it wasn't a case of my choosing. They had not completed the building when we came. I taught in a little school over on Telegraph Road. There were a lot of hornets in the wall. Some of the teachers taught down at Mount Vernon Church Building.

Well, I didn't hit the children but often I wanted to hit them. I just can't think of them being abused in that way. Now it was not unheard of to send one into the corner, or to have them write certain things. Due to the bus system, you couldn't keep them after school, which would have been a real punishment.

The depression affected the school system because during that time if you were teaching, and your husband had employment then you were not allowed to teach—one income per family.

Whatever they asked you to do, we had to do it. We had a lot of bus duty. We had to come back and raise money with dances, card parties, or whatever it would be to get certain things we wanted in the school, like books for the library.

I taught the third grade at first, then I went up to the fourth grade. Probably I taught your grandparents.

We were just beginning to work with units. That was a big step in the education system. I can remember all the various things we did. On Christmas, we made paper maché camels. It used to be that you studied so many words for your spelling, so many pages of geography, and so forth. With the unit teaching, you might study selected words related to the unit.

I believe I first started with 90 dollars a month and it increased. In the first years we were not paid during the summer months. We'd have a teachers meeting the day after Labor Day. At that time all of the teachers in the entire county could meet in one building.

I'm retired now and as you know I'm well in my 70's. I do church work and I also work with the Salvation Army. I enjoy reading and I'm always happy if I have a chance to go somewhere. I have difficulty in driving at night due to cataracts.

I taught William Durrer who was the Chief of Police in Fairfax County. I taught Harry Caroco, he's one of the Judges in the Virginia Supreme Court. There has been a great

change in schools but you couldn't begin to get the things then that are offered in schools today. I'm sure there're excellent teachers in all areas now as then.

I think it would be more challenging to teach now because all of you have been exposed to so much more through the years by T.V. and radio.

I did all the things when I was growing up, that you all would think are so corny. We had picnics, lawn games, and skip-to-my-lou-my-darlin'. We square danced. We would go out and gather chestnuts from the trees. When I was old enough, our parents hired a teacher and we would go to her home. Then they had a little slave cabin nearby, that they converted into a one room school. We went there. We had desks where we sat two together.

My father gave two acres of land and they built a one room school. I finished school in the one room school. The first year I boarded in Alexandria High School. The next year my sister and I drove to Fairfax. We parked the horse in a nearby barn and they were very happy to have the horse there because they had a garden and the horse manure was very good. We did not have to pay a fee to leave him there.

I had no children; my children were step children. But my granddaughter graduated from Virginia Polytechnical Institute this year and we often laugh about when I was in school.

Hudson: policeman

Captain Hudson, Commander of the Groveton District Station, was a senior at Mt. Vernon High School when he dropped out with four months left. He went into the paratroopers, spending 27 months in Japan and Korea. After his discharge he went back and finished high school. He tried his hand in construction work for 2½ years before deciding to join the Fairfax County Police Department primarily because of a need for financial security.

When asked about similarities between today's youth and the youth when he first joined the force, he said, "The most similar crime of the youth of today and when I first joined the force is vandalism and burglaries. Kids have always done it and the worst part is it can't be predicted."

The major difference between the youth when he joined the force and today's youth is drugs and alcohol. If a minor is found in possession of drugs, he or she will be prosecuted. He knows if someone wants to smoke marijuana or drink alcohol they'll do it. They will find a way to obtain it.

When asked if he personally favors the legalization of marijuana, he said, "I don't believe there've been enough studies conducted. Some so-called experts on the subject of marijuana who once advocated removing penalties for its possession and use have since changed their position." He thinks that alcohol and cigarettes are dangerous. He does smoke and drink some.

Does he resent people who dislike him for his authority? He doesn't resent these people and when asked about being called a "pig," he said he doesn't mind—he's been called worse. He also says that the Groveton substation probably has the highest arrest record in the county. Most arrests come from the Route 1 corridor, the arrests being drunk driving and drunk in public related incidents such as fighting due to the number of bars on Route 1.

Trice: state trooper

I was a state trooper on criminal law. I've worked on a lot of them murders. Mostly we had investigators for that but it was part of our work to enforce all criminal laws. We had jurisdiction everywhere except government property.

When I went to work you couldn't hardly buy a job. The depression was around 1931, 32, 33. They (the State Police) were going to hire a few new ones. That's when I applied. I was married then, too, I needed a job.

Wasn't but about 40,000 people I think at that time in Fairfax County. Very few stores very few filling stations, nothin' but woods. Hybla Valley Stores—all those was an airport. A good friend of mine was running it to teach pilots. Then there was one up here where Beacon Mall is. The Dixie Pig was just a small building, just a sandwich place. In later years, a friend of mine bought that and it's been enlarged. Everything's been enlarged on Route 1. These buildings around here, wasn't a thing here when I came up here in 1935. This nice old lady, Miss Quander, —she knows.

They were waterducks. If anybody drowned, we'd call in the Arnold boys. I know one night, back in '39, I got a call that a car had gone off old Route 1 into Hunting Creek. I hurried on down there, caught a fella walkin' up the bank I said, "Is anybody else down there?" and he says, "Yes, there's four more down there." He rolled the window down and got on top of the car and then he came on to the bank. The Arnold boys, that's when they came. This was in the evening. I call it supper time. They couldn't do nothin' through the night but I think they found the rest of 'em, a couple in the car.

I just enjoy people. I've been dealing with them all my life. We were very active in Citizens meetings at that time. I know at Groveton we bought street signs. We had 'em made and paid for 'em and they were selling them through the Citizen Meetings Association.

This whole thing is changed—Up there where I live on Collard Street—that was all a field. We've been here a long time.

Proffit: builder

We do asphalt paving and small jobs. Generally, we do driveways and tennis courts. There were always some dairy farms that had gone to subdivisions. At the old Groveton school, from the east side of the highway, there had been a dairy farm. That one was prior to my time. It was already a little subdivision.

My father was a construction worker and was in the excavating business for himself. He ran what they used to call a steam shovel. Actually, it is gasoline powered. He helped widen Route 1 to a three lane road and then a four. He built Coventry Road and part of Ross Street, and also, other roads in the area.

When we were little, we used to pick blackberries. Right where Bucknell Heights is, was an area that had been cleared for a cow pasture. We used to call that the first stump field. Then, where White Oaks is, that was the second stump field. When we really got far away from home, over where Hollin Hills is, an open area in there was the third stump field for blackberry picking. That was really traveling a long ways then.

This house and the one next door are sitting on the site of an anti-aircraft barrier, one of those guns that they used during World War II. In fact, I found a 50 caliber shell in my garden. They had four fifty caliber machine guns. They were mounted on a track that was turned to shoot practice rounds. I remember they had an anti-aircraft cannon. I don't know the caliber, size or whatever, but it was right in my back yard.

They had one barrack built. You've seen Army barracks, but this was just one. There was nothing to do. We had the whole place covered with little paths and the edges lined with rocks. They would have them out there painting the rocks white or red just to keep them busy.

The land where the old Groveton High School was, was a gravel pit on Mr. Burt Ayres land. Right where it stands, Mr. Earl Popkins used to have a thrashing machine. They didn't have combines like they do now. You used to have to cut it and shuck it. In the fields, there used to be little stacks of cut wheat and we'd load those old wagons and take it to the thrashing machine. There was a summer where I'd helped him on the thrashing machine. I helped shuck wheat in the field before the gravel pit was dug down to it's twenty or thirty foot level. The school was then built in the bottom of that pit. There was another gravel pit across the street where the Telephone Company building now stands.

There used to be one other central point in the community. There was a huge riding stable. They had enough stables in one barn to hold a hundred horses. Right where Bucknell Elementary School is, there was an old horse graveyard. They used to bury horses that got sick or died of old age. They also used to have horse shows over there. They used to also hold horse shows up on Beacon Field. Horses became very popular during the War because of the gasoline shortage. Everybody around here owned one. Many of them even in their garages.

Devers: motel and restaurant owner

We bought the property on Richmond Highway in 1937.

In the early forties we built a restaurant onto our house which was at 6737 Richmond Highway. We served some family meals and took care of a lot of the personnel at Fort Belvoir. Our specialty, which was almost unknown at the time, was to have chicken and seafood boxes to carry-out. My husband conceived this idea from someone he knew in Washington, D.C. The motel (Devers) was built in 1952. It was a separate structure of brick behind the white house. The name of the restaurant was The Open Kitchen.

I worked for National Permanent Savings and Loan in Washington for a good many years and I was working when we still had our restaurant. We only opened it in the evenings. My husband was the chief steward for the Department of Corrections and he would always be home in time to open it and when I came home, I would help, too. We were rather busy people. We would open Saturdays and Sundays.

I flew from Beacon Airport, at times, with Franklin Reid and some of the fliers. One time I was taking some people down to look at a room in the motel and we were walking back and here was an airplane coming right across Number 1 highway and they looked at me and said, "Does this happen all the time?"

I very calmly replied, "No, not all the time."

Once in a while one would hit. There was a high transformation wire below us before houses were built on Schooley Drive (which was originally Marshall Street) and on occasion someone flying low would hit one of those wires. They hit that high wire one time but did not cause any fire to any resident. It just caught on fire at the end of the wire, and the plane went off and there was fire going from it. One plane came down and landed luckily between the garage and a tree, but it didn't cause any fire.

Most of the flying from this area was done from Beacon Airport. Beacon Airport trained a lot of the navy fliers. We had people stay in the motel that flew in the Beacon Airport. Arthur Godfrey was flying over there when we first moved here. People told me that was where he learned to fly.

I recall an air spotting station on Collard Street years ago during the Second World War that was built from donation of the residents. When I came home from the office, I would take my two hour stand and Monday nights, my husband and Mr. Wilson; Pierce Reid and Herbert Blount—the four of them would man it for several hours in the night. The ladies would watch during the daytime. We received certificates for manning the station. We did it over a long period, more than a year. Then we had black-outs, and we all had to take part in that. If any plane was suspicious, we had a number to call and it was very seldom that it was used. I don't remember anyone spotting a plane.

I've retired now. I don't say entirely, because we have some business to take care of. I was a registrar well over thirty years. About seven or eight years ago, I gave it up. I'm still an election official. The only voting place we had was a small community house on Telegraph Road. That took care of everyone in the area—all around from this side of Franconia up to Hybla Valley. Then we moved to the Penn Daw Fire House which used to be on Richmond Highway down where the carpet place is now. That is where we had voting for a good many years. Then they split us again and the east side became Bucknell and Fairhaven and Jefferson Manor. All those places became heavily populated and they had to split it up into precincts.

Cas Neer: architect

I first became interested in Hollin Hills about 1950, shortly after I moved here to the metropolitan area. I worked for one firm in the District and a friend went to work for Charles Goodman who was the architect for the new community. Since the community was just being planned he let me in on the ground floor on what was happening, and being an architect I was particularly interested. To my knowledge, it was the first modern community that was planned for a speculative developer. I had just moved down here from Boston and there were two or three communities in Boston which had been planned communities, all modern, however they were designed individually for each family, whereas this was a "track built development."

Using the same principles of a planned community, but planned particularly in the sense of getting the maximum natural use of the site involved, Hollin Hills is a very hilly rolling sight, and the idea was to maintain as much of the natural vegetation, the natural charm of the wooded area, and utilize the valleys and the contours of the land in the most efficient way. It resulted in a number of cul-de-sacs around which groups of houses were built, which provided considerable privacy. Nevertheless it does

a great deal more for the land and the preserving of trees and natural streams. It also provided natural drainage areas from the slopes to go into streams which were then developed into little park areas that were open community property.

One of the manifestations of modern architecture was the discovery of how glass could amplify the sense of space, particularly since the houses were relatively small. With as much natural vegetation being preserved, there was something to look out on when you had all of this glass.

One of the main purposes of the design was that this was not tightly designed individual lots separated by fences, but was to have a sense of community where one space flowed into the other. By in large it has been very successful although there had been some areas where people jealously guarded their privacy by the erection of fences. The groups of shrubbery suggested boundaries to some degree, so one got a sense of ownership without a hard line of demarcation, therefore contributing to the sense of total community.

I would say basically they function well, or they wouldn't have sold as well as they did. There's nothing particularly unusual about the function of the houses other than perhaps the extreme amount of glass by comparison to other standards. The glass would tend, in the wrong orientation, to make some bedrooms cold and less desirable and therefore disturb the function to some degree. Most every area had the advantage of considerable solar gain and the delight of sunlight coming within the house not only reduced the heating bill, but also created communal areas, and the families tended to congregate in them. In that sense I think it has a particularly good function.

As to their adaptation to new forms of heat or new forms of energy—all that's rather difficult to say. In regard to solar heat which is probably the prominent variation energy consideration today, the most effective slope of a roof to get the maximum benefit from solar radiation is considerably steeper than most of the Hollin Hills houses, so that you begin to have a very great architectural effect upon the present buildings. So it becomes an individual architectural decision if solar heat is added.

Already available on the market are separate solar heating units that can be placed strategically anywhere near the house unrelated to the buildings themselves. So this is one possibility of adding solar energy to the buildings without having to change the architecture of them.

I have lived in three Hollin Hills houses and have found all of them had very reasonable heating bills by comparison with what friends of mine had who lived in traditional houses.

I started my architectural practice starting Hollin Hills additions in one form or the other. Some additions were easier to handle architecturally than others. The general intent of the community is to respect the character and aesthetics of the basic design which was originated as part of the overall project. These houses were started in the 50's and the aesthetics of Hollin Hills is a 1950 aesthetics. We are well into the 70's and architectural attitudes and aesthetic attitudes have changed considerably within that 20 year period. Most of the additions you are seeing today have a much more 70's look, whatever that means! There is less glass, less concern with functional requirement and more variety of architectural expression. There still is the usual requirement that all additions receive approval by the architectural reviewing committee that has been maintained from the beginning of Hollin Hills.

My particular vintage sort of was related to the modern movement of architecture. I was excited about the very features that Hollin Hills provided not only social, as a planned community, but its adaptation to natural surroundings, its use of glass, enjoyment of nature, and the introduction of sunlight. Having lived in this kind of environment as well as in traditional houses, I have found it highly satisfactory. I think it is superior to surrounding communities, certainly the Bucknells and some that were much more concerned with profits.

The lightness of support members within the large areas of glass of Hollin Hills has been heavily criticized by the more traditional because of the feeling of flimziness. This was a purposeful objective of the 50's, to take everything down to its lightness and still be structurally effective, to have a minimum of massive wall. A traditional house was basically a mass with holes punched in it.

Planned community is a sort of catch all term and there have been planned communities before so it's not a new thing. It just happened to be one of the first. My opinion of why Hollin Hills was significant is that it was built by people who were presumably out to make a fast buck and utilize the latest principles of good sound planning in terms of human and natural resources and trying to get the most out of the land for the land and for the people.

I would also point that the very same principles employed in Hollin Hills back in the 40's and 50's are the basic principles that were used in the planned communities in Reston and Columbia, two of the very earliest basic complete towns that were an expansion of the very same principles of the Hollin Hills plan.

A Frank Lloyd Wright house is not a particular type however, he is perhaps most well known by the houses he has done in Wisconsin and Illinois. One of the things they seem to have in common were great overhangs partly because they were in the prairie country of the U.S. and there was not always vegetation to give relief from the sun. The Hollin Hills standard pitch (roof) had a reasonable overhang but they did not have the great sheltering feeling of his (Wright's) earlier houses. Some of the models, one of which I lived in, in Hollin Hills, with absolutely no overhang was a glass box, a sort of eloquent little abstract piece of space, but it gave absolutely no shelter. If you didn't have a good roof drain, the roof filled up and poured over the sides of the glass and you would get all kinds of leaks through the openings of the glass, plus your windows would become a waterfall and a lot of times you would find ice all over the windows of Hollin Hills.

Traditions



Bert Ayres, the Knight of Groveton

Bennett and Sherwood

MR. BENNETT: You know the little white building on Popkins Lane? That was a Fairfax County school house years ago. Her father went there.

MRS. BENNETT: He only went there one year.

MR. BENNETT: It was a Fairfax County School is what I'm trying to bring out.

MRS. BENNETT: He donated the land.

MR. BENNETT: It belongs to St. Louis Church now.

MRS. BENNETT: It used to be little St. Louis Church before we built the big one.

My father bought 43 acres from a J. C. Collard, December 9, 1909. It was called Groveton Farms. At that time there was a Clifton Road in the deed, so it must have been Clifton Road that it was on.

MR. BENNETT: That's where Popkins Lane is. I can't remember why they named it Popkins Lane.

MRS. SHERWOOD: It was supposed to be Popkins-Ayres Drive. There was two Popkins' and one Ayres so they just made it Popkins.

MRS. BENNETT: I was born there, she was born there, and another brother was born there. Then a new house was built there in 1921. Then my father sold the place

because he was paralyzed. To whom, I can not think of now but I think it was a real estate man. Then St. Louis Church bought it from them. Then Groveton High School bought a part of it. My mother had one section up there that she lived in.

Where the old Groveton football field is used to be my father's gravel pit.

MR. BENNETT: They took gravel out when they was building the road to Fort Belvoir.

MRS. SHERWOOD: All the gravel came out of our place and Cranford and Sons built the highway.

MR. BENNETT: A lot of the gravel came out of there went for National Airport. They took thousands and thousands of loads to cover that place.

MRS. SHERWOOD: Yeah, that was later on. He had to go out of the milk business because of it.

Fort Belvoir was Camp Humphreys during World War I. They took the gravel out of our place because they came down and they tested it all around and we had the best gravel. While that road was being built, they built another camp down the hill from us across from Cherry Arms apartments. That was called Camp Lonesome during World War I. They tore that down right after the war was over.

MRS. BENNETT: Where Cherry Arms is was my father's land too. It went right down to Nightingale's. They had a night club there.

MR. BENNETT: Mr. Nightingale bought that piece of land and put the club there.

MRS. SHERWOOD: That was the first club in this area.

MR. BENNETT: They had a beautiful dance floor.

MRS. SHERWOOD: They sure did.

MRS. BENNETT: They had bands, and a dance floor, eating.

MR. BENNETT: We were courting in those days.

MRS. SHERWOOD: That was the music of the 1920's.

MR. BENNETT: Watch it, watch it. We didn't get married 'till '36.

MRS. BENNETT: I was only sixteen then.

MR. BENNETT: Thirties, music of the thirties.

MRS. BENNETT: His great grandfather, Jeremiah Reagan, bought this land right here. clear down to Spring Bank and clear down to Quander Road in the 1850's and it was called Johnson Hill. He came from Ireland.

MR. BENNETT: At least six generations branch out from this piece of land. That's six generations on this property.

MRS. BENNETT: He's buried at St. Mary's Church. He was born in 1809 and died in 1890. That was my husband's great, great grandfather.

They'd have what they called lawn parties in the daytime and they'd last up until night. Then they'd have the dancing and to-do at night time for whoever won the tournaments.

MRS. SHERWOOD: Up here at Pierce-Reid they used to have it.

MRS. BENNETT: I was crowned at Franconia. The tournaments were so much fun.

They'd have big lights strung sort of like Japanese lanterns. They used to have these paper cups, like bowls, and you'd get two dips of ice cream and a piece of homemade cake for a nickel. And people would make crocheted things and lace things. And a spinning wheel contest to see who could spin the fastest. They'd have different games like that.

Then during the day they'd have this tournament. It's really hard. My father was very good at it. You'd have to get on the horse a certain way, running, and hold it (the rod) so you could get them (the rings) on it. It was a long rod and it had a point on it. The rings started out big, and gradually came down to just enough to fit onto the end. Whoever won, out of so many tries, crowned the queen that night.

It was really tricky. My mother and father had one back at the grapevine in the back and Bert used to practice and practice.

MRS. SHERWOOD: His horse was Starlight. It was all bay except one white spot on his forehead looked like a star.

QUESTION: Did he win a lot of the tournaments?

MRS. SHERWOOD: Yes, between him and an uncle of ours, Jack Ayres. He lived down by Gum Springs.

QUESTION: Were they both the "Knights of Groveton," or just your father?

MRS. SHERWOOD: Just my father.

MRS. BENNETT: When the church gave the lawn party where me and Lawrence had our picture taken, was that given by the Catholic church?

MRS. SHERWOOD: That was given by the Catholic church because the Presbyterian church was giving one the same night and Father Schmidt came down and wanted to know had we had our tickets printed. We told him, "No," and he said, "Well, we've already got our tickets printed, so let us have it and you all have it the following week. Otherwise neither one of us will make anything, and we'll help you out." So we all went over there that night and when the Presbyterian church gave their lawn party we had more Catholics there than we had Presbyterians. We made over \$500.

There was no activities down here except the church, and Sunday school, and get togethers at people's homes. Now the Weiss' had quite a family of children, so on Friday and Saturday nights they'd give what we called a taffy party. This was when you'd pull taffy until it got hard and you'd eat that. Then she'd serve cookies and some sort of punch that she'd make. Anybody that had long hair, they'd be pulling taffy and boy, before you'd know it, they'd have it all around their head.

MRS. BENNETT: And then we had watermelons, too. And you'd finish eating the watermelon and the boys would wash your face with the watermelon rind.

MRS. SHERWOOD: That's if they could catch you.

The tournaments was only twice a year on 4th of July, and Labor Day, because they were the only holidays the farmers would take off.

MRS. BENNETT: They got rid of the horses you see, and it is a shame. Lots of the bad winters my father used to have to take the wheels off an old wagon and load his milk into it, put the horses to it and bring it across to where old Groveton High School

is now, out to the highway so he could put it on the truck and get it to town. The snow was that deep. And they thought we had such an awful winter this year. Then the sleighs, too, with the horses was fun.

We used to have hayrides too, by golly, we forgot! Used to take a wagon and load it with hay and the horses pull it. A whole bunch of kids would get on and sing and just ride and ride.

MRS. SHERWOOD: It used to go down to Kirk Wilkinson's house and he'd have a bonfire built and there you'd toast marshmallows and have hot dogs on sticks. You didn't have bread with it, you just had hotdogs. Used to have sleighing parties too, when the snow was high. And sleigh ride over by Popkins Hill there, you could sleigh down right to Kirk Wilkinson's house and he'd have a bonfire for you.

MRS. BENNETT: We had wood stoves, that's what my mother cooked on. We had a wood stove in the living room and the sitting room. Then we had a huge fireplace. It was the length of the room, for the dining room. Upstairs we had no heat. It was cold. I used to make my bed before I got out of it.

MR. BENNETT: Ghost stories!

MRS. BENNETT: My mother's place you know, during the Civil War they had a fort and the soldiers came and took over the house, with the kids there.

MRS. SHERWOOD: That was all Hardbowers Hill.

MRS. BENNETT: The soldiers came in and took over the house.

MRS. SHERWOOD: That headless horse rode this strip of road here.

MRS. BENNETT: I thought it was over at Mt. Comfort, down through that dip. This old colored man that lived over there said that that horse went by him and you could see the horse but he had no head. You couldn't get him to come out of that house at nighttime to come across that field unless it was death. He would not 'cause he'd see that horse. It was white and it had no head.

MRS. BENNETT: Well, I thought going down in that dip to Mt. Comfort cemetery. There was a headless man they said.

MRS. SHERWOOD: Headless man, yeah, but this was a headless horse.

The children of today don't have the fun that we had even though we had nothing. We didn't know what it was to discriminate. We had blacks working for us that lived on the farm. After our day's work was done and supper was eaten we'd get out and play high-over. We'd get three or four on each side of the house and see who could throw a ball and who could catch it and bring it around to the other side. We'd play high-over or we'd play hide-and-go-seek.

MRS. BENNETT: Kick the can.

MRS. SHERWOOD: Or we'd have jumping rope or we'd play ball.

MRS. BENNETT: And that's the way we entertained ourselves and we didn't know what it was to get bored.

MRS. BENNETT: We rode horses too.

MRS. SHERWOOD: We rode horses and we disobeyed like children of today.

MRS. BENNETT: You might have.

MRS. SHERWOOD: Now after the horses had worked all day and they were fed, we had to take them down to the lower field and leave them to graze. We were not supposed to ride those horses down. We were supposed to get behind them and shoo 'em on down. We'd get on those horses and ride them down and see who could jump the branch.

MRS. BENNETT: One of the things the kids miss nowadays is not coming up on a farm and learning how to milk a cow. The children nowadays aren't brought up on a farm like we were and they don't have the work to do from morning to night. Then you was so tired you didn't have time to get in trouble. In the olden times by the time we finished our work and everything Mama had chickens we had to feed, we had to help her.

MR. BENNETT: There was conversation then, reading. There wasn't any T.V. You had a victrola.

MRS. SHERWOOD: Or you had a player piano. And you played dominoes or checkers. You can't compare it. There wasn't any automobiles that the kids could use.

MR. BENNETT: Horse and buggy.

MRS. SHERWOOD: Sometimes the children would take a horse and go out 'cause I know my brother took a horse and the horse threw him and stepped on his leg. He didn't tell my parents 'cause he knew he was gonna get in trouble if he did. But my mother found out. They still did things then that they weren't supposed to do. We were forbidden to get up on the barns and things, but when we played hide-and-go-seek we'd get up on top of the barn and hide. I often think back if you slipped and fell where would you be now.

MR. BENNETT: Only time you got in trouble was on Saturday night. Only time you went to town was on Saturday night. You worked all week and on Saturday night you quit early around 1 or 2 o'clock.

MRS. SHERWOOD: Not on our farm you didn't. You quit at 3 or 4 o'clock.

MR. BENNETT: You go down to town on Saturday night and everybody'd gather on King Street.

MRS. SHERWOOD: You'd get into Alexandria and if you had a girl friend, you'd get in around a quarter to nine. Our father'd say, "OK, you can go to the movies, but be back here at 9:30." Who in the dickens could go to the movies?

MR. BENNETT: Give you a quarter and say bring me the 15¢ change.

MRS. SHERWOOD: That's right.

MR. BENNETT: See there wasn't any bus line here. They used to have a street car went from Washington down to New Alexandria. Say I wanted to come from up here to see my grandmother Regan, (we's living in Washington) we'd have to get off at New Alexandria and we'd have to walk all the way up to the farm. Weren't any buses.

MRS. BENNETT: Well, I rode with Daddy on the milk truck because he delivered milk in Alexandria and served door to door, you see, retail.

MRS. SHERWOOD: We went in on the milk truck, my brother and sister and I, and we'd get in to St. Mary's Academy at 7:30 in the morning and we had to wait

'till they had breakfast and then started school. Then we'd have to walk home from Alexandria which was 4½ miles right from St. Mary's Academy on Prince Street to our door. We walked rain or shine, hail or blow.

MR. BENNETT: Didn't wear shoes either, had to take your shoes off. Didn't want them shoes walkin' back and forth to school.

MRS. BENNETT: I didn't walk, buses was running when I went.

MRS. SHERWOOD: Buses, right. But Daddy didn't let us ride the buses, my dear girl. He wouldn't let us ride the bus. He said, "God made our feet."

MR. BENNETT: Were you allowed to wear your shoes in between? Used to have to carry your shoes over your shoulder so you wouldn't ruin them.

MRS. SHERWOOD: Summertime we didn't have shoes. My mother said you didn't need shoes to work out in the field.

But I still say that the children of today have missed a lot. That's the reason when they grow up and they have to go to work they're bored with life.

Dodson

When we first moved out here, Beacon Hill Airport used to be the favorite play area for young kids. I happened to get a flight with Arthur Godfrey when he used to fly out of there for Good Gulf Gasoline. He worked for radio station WJSV which is no longer in existence, I guess.

The second war, the Navy took it over and used it as a training field. In the early forties they used to have parachute jumps on the Sunday afternoons and that was a big attraction. We used to have airshows here and Betty Shelton, one of the famous women flyers, used to do barnstorming around here. On Sunday afternoon it was either watch the guy jump out of the airplane or watch one of the local ball teams play ball up behind the Sunlight Inn. That was up where the Dixie Pig is today.

As a matter of fact in the Groveton area about the only thing you really had to do was take a good walk. There were many sandlot ball teams around here in the area, quite a few adult hardball teams, which is something that's a thing of the past now. One of the biggest fields used to be up at Dan Reagan's who was the owner of the Sunlight Inn up there behind the Pig. That was another big weekend attraction, ball playing up there.

I guess one of the most forgotten things about this area was the dirt race track that was down at Hybla Valley in the later 40's and early 50's. There was a ¼ mile dirt track down there and it took off real big there for a while and they had some well-known drivers come in and drive. The fire department even had a Demolition Derby down there for fund raising. I think everybody, every youngster that drove a car at one time or another went down there and ran on the dirt track. At that time there was no other racing around other than what the kids used to do in the street.

Uncle Bill Viar was a gentleman who lived at Groveton, everyone called him Uncle. He had the Viarwood Riding Academy. Just about everybody who didn't have their

own horse went up there to ride. There used to be quite a few horse shows in the area. As the population increased around here the horses sort of died off due to the restrictions.

When I was growing up, of course the colored went to their own school and we went to ours. We had sandlot football and baseball teams and we used to play the boys that lived over on Quander Road and the ones over at Gum Springs and we never had a problem. When I was a kid, and delivering papers, I used to deliver to Mr. Quander that lived over on Quander Road, and he was a very nice, well-respected gentleman in the neighborhood. I guess Quander Road and Gum Springs are about the two oldest Negro settlements in the area.

Barnes

I first came here in 1939 and started in '40 to build my house on what is known today as Memorial Street. It was East Oak in those days and it was a gravel street. All streets was gravel except Number 1 highway and Beacon Hill Road past the Dixie Pig. At that time when you come down Number 1 highway when you got over three blocks off of Route 1 that was the end of town.

During the Civil War when the soldiers came home, they brought to the area the sport of baseball. Before that time when people got together for entertainment, the men would go in the woods and they would fight. They would wrestle and box. They would have a big picnic where everybody got all they could eat and drink. Then the men would go down in the woods and fight, and the women would set around and talk quilting.

The first real sport to draw attention to this area was what is known as jousting, tournament riding. That's like the knight's rode with the lance and picked the rings up. Mrs. Popkins, her husband and her brother-in-law were big tournament riders. They rode under the name of the Knights of Clifton. That was the name of the farm. A man named Burt Ayres rode as the Knight of Groveton. In the process of riding tournament the man that wins gets a wreath to crown his Queen with, that's the prize he gets. Then they have a big dance and a big ball. He crowns his lady fair.

The next sport that came along to take any size crowd, was baseball. Every community and town in the United States always had what was known as a sandlot baseball team. When I moved to Groveton in '39, up where the Dixie Pig is now, there was a baseball diamond. They would play there on Sunday afternoon, and we'd go in the Dixie Pig and set. They came around and stick their hats in the window to get the collection to help pay for the balls. They would challenge other communities. They paid some of the guys, but most was just amateur. A lot of them would be broken down professional ball players who couldn't make it in the big league.

Then the baseball went out when the war came on, and everybody went horse happy in this country. Everybody that had a yard big enough to put a horse in, they bought a horse. We used to put on horse shows. Our first show was on the 7th day of November in 1943, a Sunday.

The largest crowd that was ever in Groveton was a motorcycle race. Mr. Reid gave them permission to build a race track. They came there and worked about a week with

a grader and make an 8th of a mile track. They advertised to have a motorcycle race. The people came on a Saturday. It rained so hard that they couldn't have the race because the track was a dirt track. We estimated that there was 5,000 people. The cars was around that track and they was just like a parking lot. They even went across the street. They just closed everything up in Groveton. They came from New Jersey, even as far as Florida, to come to that race. Afterwards business people along Route 1 went to the Board of Supervisors and outlawed the motorcycle races.

We used to ride down here in the woods on Sundays. People down here played what they called gambling dominos. You know, the crap game. And then they did have cock fights, but they didn't draw very big crowds because the law would get them. That's since I've lived here. Back in the days before the civil war that was a great sport in this area. Up until the Humane Society outlawed it.

Arnold: Streetcar Pranks

MR. ARNOLD: Us kids, we'd put our money together and we didn't want to pay carfare and spend that money (7¢ per ticket). So we'd stop the conductor, they were real nice, and they knew what we were doing. We'd just say, "What time is the next car comin' by," or somethin' like that. And on the back there they had this big, somethin' like a cow catcher. It was a big cup that the other cars hooked on to. While we were talkin' one of the guys would get on the back of that and sit in it. Ride all the way to town.

MRS. ARNOLD: Free ride or a free lunch!

MR. ARNOLD: When we was goin' to school there was so durn many of us in our family, nine boys and seven girls, and we was goin' to a city school and had to pay. You lived in the county and ya couldn't go up there unless you paid, and then payin' the car fare too.

My father used to have to buy these books of tickets. And each one of us had one to last us say a week. And anyway to make money, the seats would fold over like this (in an upside down V) and we'd get on that car real fast and push the seats over and two or three of 'em would get down under it.

We wouldn't let the conductor see who was in there. We'd stand all around him and give him the ticket! And that was the money we could spend that day for that ticket. We'd sell it to somebody and spend the money for candy.

When I was a kid down here at night time all the boys would go up there in that station. It was just an open station, corrugated metal and benches all the way around it. The station was right at the corner of Potomac Avenue and Belle Haven Road. And that's where all the trouble started.

MRS. ARNOLD: How 'bout puttin' that money on the tracks?

MR. ARNOLD: Oh yes!

MRS. ARNOLD: Greasin' the tracks!

MR. ARNOLD: Yeah, there was a man that worked for the Potomac Yards, a southern railroad. His name was Clark and he lived in that Flattops. He used to get us those torpedos you'd put on the track. It was like a bomb they put on the track. And they put 'em on the railroads in those days for an emergency, ya know. But down here we just put 'em out for the hell of it, to scare people.

Used to grease the tracks too. We could see the street car comin' and we used to get these buckets of grease from this old man, Mr. Clark, and we'd grease that track for as far as you could see. And here it'd come, hell bustin', get to this station and slap on those brakes, and just keep on goin'! That was the only thing we had to do in those days down here.

Then there was those sassafras trees that always grew along the railroad track. They'd have the men come down a certain time of year and they'd cut 'em. And they didn't get any higher than three feet, but burn, boy those things would really burn! At night time we'd get a big pile of 'em, all us boys, and put 'em right in the middle of the track. And we'd see that train comin' across and we'd set it on fire. My father used to, oh boy, he used to . . .

Parkway fights

There was no boulevard at all at that time. I call it the boulevard, it's the Parkway. They didn't put it in here 'till about thirty-five, somewhere along in there. That's how come we moved. See, our house was right where the picnic area is now. You come down Belle Haven Road, and cross the park and go all the way over into the picnic area. Our house was right on the waterfront there.

MRS. ARNOLD: Tell 'em about the fight you had down there. Wasn't it your mother got in the concrete?

MR. ARNOLD: Yeah, they were buildin' the boulevard right in front of my house. They were layin' the concrete this way from Mt. Vernon. They did it in patches really. And they were right in front of our house pourin' this concrete and my brothers worked for the company that was buildin' the highway. It was three or four of my brothers that were workin' for 'em. The people that were buildin' it were contractors from North Carolina. They had the bid on it and all these men from North Carolina were up here. And anyway somehow or another one of my brothers got in a fight with one of 'em. They beat him up and he come told my other brothers and the four of 'em got together.

They went down, got in a big fight and beat these guys up. Anyway, my father was real hotheaded and he came home. He was an old man at that time. So he came home, got his gun and he was gonna do 'em all in. So all down the lane right across this wet concrete, my father ran across it, and all us kids ran across it, and my mother ran across it tryin' to catch my father and she fainted! Right smack dab in the concrete. I'll never forget that. Got her up and somebody carried her home, but by that time he'd gone, he'd gone.

The county police came down there and told everyone they'd better cut it out, but they didn't arrest anybody.

That night these guys here from North Carolina and South Carolina knew what they'd gotten into so they decided to go on back home. You know where Ft. Hunt Road bisects No. 1 Highway, well they were all down at that gas station gassin' up to go back home. Man, that's where the fight started. That's when they all got locked up. Tore the man's gas station up. Father had to pay for all the damages. Had to go up to the jail, Fairfax jail the next mornin' and get 'em all out!

Dripping Springs

Where the library is and then that hillside where you start comin' down, well Dripping Spring used to be along there. I remember Easter Monday when we was out of school and nobody went to work that day. That was a real big day. We'd all get in the wagon and they'd bake cakes and everything. Big Easter baskets and all. We'd go up in Dripping Springs, play games, have a good time and make a day of it.

MRS. ARNOLD: Even when he came back from overseas we went up there.

MR. ARNOLD: Yeah, we still did. Loads of people'd come from Alexandria did the same thing. They'd walk down here. A lot of Boy Scouts used to camp out there. The scouts had built a swimming pool up there. They dammed a little creek up. Had this long rope, you'd get on one side, swing over and drop into the pond.

MRS. ARNOLD: Tarzan and Jane.

Bootlegging

Mr. Bob Arnold was a known bootlegger in the Groveton area throughout the 1920's in New Alexandria. His son, Pat Arnold, made the well-remembered corn whiskey recipe available.

The first necessary ingredients are corn meal and 50 pounds of sugar and water. These are combined in two twenty gallon barrels along with a large yeast cake which makes the heat for the fermentation process. The mixture is left in the barrels for about eight days and near the end of these days Mr. Arnold said, "You can see bubbles coming to the top of the barrels and bursting." When the bubbles burst, the sediment goes to the bottom of the barrels and then this is bucketed out for further processing. The fermented corn meal is then put in the still where it is heated. The steam goes up through the copper coils where it cools and the process ends by letting the sediment run through to a bucket of water. As Mr. Arnold finished explaining the procedure he said, "That's where the alcohol is—in the bucket at the end."

This recipe for corn whiskey is about 140 proof and makes about fifteen gallons. For really good whiskey though, the process did not stop here, but the alcohol was transferred into charcoal barrels and stored. This gave the whiskey a hearty charcoal flavor. "Course you had to leave it in there a year or two," conveyed Pat Arnold.

If one were eager to find a large whiskey supply in the 20's, the place to go would have been the Arnold's rose arbor. According to Mr. Arnold it was filled with barrels. He said, "We'd dig up the ground in the arbor and put the barrels in the ground and cover 'em up with dirt. Leave 'em in there six or so months and then bring them out for Christmas."

Among the most regular customers of the Arnold's business were the prominent people from Alexandria. In the 20's a ½ gallon of good whiskey, "which ours was," Mr. Arnold said assuringly, costs maybe two or three dollars.

To some, the business might sound fairly easy and most profitable, but things did not always run smoothly. The revenueurs were not a big problem, but they did make a show of face now and then. When this problem arose, the Arnolds were first to know about it because for access to the known areas of alcohol preparation, the Arnold's Daddy's boat was always needed. While the revenueurs were out paddling in the boat,

the Arnolds were up on their house roof shooting off the gun and waving the sheet as warning about the oncoming, uninvited visitors. It sounded as if the revenuers were fighting a losing battle.

With the creation of the 18th Amendment though, the bootlegging business for the Arnolds and many others culminated. People found it easier to buy their liquor from the government. Bootlegging wasn't a very profitable activity after this time, but Mr. Arnold assured us, "Course many had stills in those days but they would never tell ya."

Arnold

I was telling you about bootleg, my father used to bootleg. Well see this bottle says Fairfax and Company. Well, this was a whiskey bottle you used to be able to go in the store and buy, years back.

MRS. ARNOLD: There were no ABC stores.

MR. ARNOLD: We didn't make that much.

MRS. ARNOLD: He didn't have his name on his bottle!

MR. ARNOLD: Here's one that has a street address, now I used to hear my parents talk about these people. J. J. Kelly, corner of King and West St.

There was a lot of bootlegging. Used to be about 25 houses down here and I can only think of about three people, and they worked for the government, if they'd been caught drinkin' or makin' it they'd of lost their jobs.

It was just a normal thing to do in those days. You'd be surprised at some we sold it to. They used to all buy it. It was good whiskey, and if they knew you made good whiskey you could get a good price for it.

QUESTION: Did you ever go into Belle Haven to sell it?

MR. ARNOLD: Yeah, no.

MRS. ARNOLD: No, they came to him!

MR. ARNOLD: Belle Haven, there wasn't anything up there in those days.

MRS. ARNOLD: But everybody out of Alexandria used to come down.

MR. ARNOLD: Yeah, and we used to take it to town and sell it.

When I was a little kid, this guy, Willie, had a still. And he used to have these big barrels. This was a huge thing, I can remember the darn thing. It was a great big copper thing and it used to burn charcoal. The charcoal wouldn't make smoke so of 'course the people couldn't see smoke.

But just to give you an idea of how open it was, [now] Belle Haven Road came down there right in front of it, just about where the gas station is. That's where this little shack was where Willie had his still set up in it. So you can imagine how open people were with things like that. And the people down in this little creek, they had stills set up, little stills. There was nobody to bother 'em. The revenuers very seldom come down here.

Gallagher

This was the period during prohibition too. And a lot of these people were rum runners, bootleggers. They had smoke screens attached to their cars, and if they were being chased by a cop they would just pull a wire and it would let some kind of a chemical go into the exhaust and just engulf the whole road. It was just like going into a cloud bank. The cop wouldn't know where the heck he was, y'know. That was how they eluded pursuit in the old days. Smoke screens and speed.

Hunting Creek used to be a big creek. They had arks floating on Hunting Creek. People lived in these arks, like people live in trailers. These people didn't pay any taxes, just lived on these arks. Bootlegging and all kinds of illicit stuff going on.



An Ark, located on Hunting Creek before 1959.

Adams

Somebody used to see a light off the point of Mt. Vernon at the wharf, and when you got down there, there wouldn't be any light. Allie Nightingale who built the Nightingale Motel (his son built the trailer park) and I used to spend a lot of time on the river. It was poor fishing, but people had to have some good drinking whiskey. There was moonshining out there and we would go down the river and get it from the boats who would bring in good distilled bonded whiskey from Europe. I don't know too much about it and I've never had a drink of whiskey in my life but I liked the thrill of going in a fast boat down the river.

Penn Daw Fire Dept: Rouse

QUESTION: What year did you start the Penn Daw Fire Department?

Well, we started it somewhere back in 1939 to 1940. The closest fire department was in the city of Alexandria and the closest one in the county was out in Franconia. We had some house fires but mostly field fires. Every spring when people would start cleaning up they would light fires and they'd get away from them.

They'd rake up the yards and try to burn all that trash up, then the wind would catch a bunch of it and blow it over into a field and the first thing you'd know the whole field would be on fire. I've seen practically half of that Hybla Valley field on fire. Sometimes we'd fight those things all night long.

You couldn't even get the truck back in some of those fields. It'd be too rough. So we'd have to walk back to the truck, fill it up, go back out there, squirt some water on it. When we first started we only had one fire truck and then we got a trailer from the Civil Defense that had a big pump on it, but it didn't carry any water and if we wasn't near a pond, it wasn't any good. The truck that we had carried 500 gallons of water and we put out most fires with that.

QUESTION: Was the fire department volunteer?

Strictly volunteer, we had no paid men whatsoever.

At one time we had about 130 men on the roll. Of course, we never got that many at every fire. But it took that many to work the fire department. We had some men that would fight fires and we had some men that helped raise money, like run the bingo games or run the horseshows that we used to have and the carnivals. When we first started we didn't get anything from the county. We had to get the money together to build the building and buy the truck.

QUESTION: What kind of fund raisers did you have?

The biggest ones we'd have would be the carnivals. We'd have a carnival that would run for about a week. It used to run up on the fields on the top of the hill from the old firestation. This is where Memco and Beacon Mall are now. Of course when we were running them then that field was a big airport.

QUESTION: What was the worst fire you ever fought?

I guess the biggest one, was where there was another airport down at Hybla Valley and the hanger caught fire. It was a couple hundred feet long and was on fire from one end to the other. That was about the hottest fire but there was no people in that. The worst fire I remember, was the small house down in Gum Springs. Three little children were in the house. Evidently something happened and the house caught fire and burnt all three of the little children up. It was the worst because we had to go in there and get those little children out.

QUESTION: Where did you go to school?

My first school was in a one room church. All the grades were in one room. There was only two or three in one grade. One teacher would teach first to this grade over here then she'd get them to studying and go to the next one. So that year by year you already knew what was going to be in your next grade cause you'd sit there and listen to it. This was good in a way because it wasn't just something brand new when you went into that next grade.

After fourth grade out here, and the fifth and sixth grades, I went up to what's called Snowden school up on Fort Hunt Road. We had to ride the old electric train that ran from Mount Vernon to Alexandria. In the seventh grade I went to an Alexandrian school.

QUESTION: Do you know anything about Dyke Marsh?

When I was a kid the old electric train ran right down just about where the Mount Vernon Memorial Highway is now. Right where you could see that sort of channel come in right close to the road, there was an old house boat and this old fella, we used to call him "Cigarette Dodson," lived down in that house boat. He trapped and fished and made a regular living. Then when they put the boulevard down thru there they bought the land and they wouldn't give him right of way to park his car or to get across to his place so he had to move.

QUESTION: How did they call you to come to a fire?

In those days when you called in a fire you called the operator and told her you had a fire. She'd take the address and when she rang our phone in the firehouse it set a siren off and it rang until somebody ran in and answered the phone. We had some men that lived right across the street from the firehouse, then after we put a few additions on we put a little bunk room up there and we had a lot of single men that lived right at the firehouse. Of course, when the phone rang and the siren went off they'd jump off, answer the phone and write up on the board where the fire was. And being so close to it they'd get the first truck and go right on out. Then all the other volunteers would come in and it'd be on the board where the first truck had gone so we'd get in the second and third.

QUESTION: What did you do when you weren't a volunteer?

I was working for the C & P Telephone Company most of the time up until World War II. Then I went with Trans World Airlines and stayed with them for about four years. Then after the war was over I went back to the telephone company and then came here to Mt. Vernon. I've been here 29 years, and I do repairs and so forth to everything on the place, the buildings, the furniture in the buildings, the equipment that it takes to keep the grass mowed and keep the grounds up.

Barnes

Our biggest disaster we had here was where the Shell filling station is on Route 1 up there by the Texaco. Right back of it was a big dairy barn and they converted the stable into an apartment house and ten families lived there during the war. The people in this area knew it was the old stable. Soldiers lived there during the war. I think about twenty children lived in there. It caught on fire and burned up a lady and three children. They found two of them but they never found the third one.

My wife turned the alarm in. She was out in the yard hanging up clothes; the barn was just about 50 yards from our house. She went back in the house and looked out the kitchen window. She saw smoke. She just picked up the phone and called Joe Dove, the first paid fireman at Penn Daw. She said, "Joe, the old barn is on fire!" She grabbed a sweater and run out in the back yard. He got in and come down, one man on a truck. They fought and it burned.

That was the first fire that the Penn Daw had that they lost anybody. And up until that time there was no building code in Fairfax County. When you went to build your

house you could build it upside down and they could have cared less. Just so you was on the books so they could tax you for it. After the fire, the people in this community gathered at the Penn Daw fire house and they demanded that the Board of Supervisors start what was then known as the building code.

Now the other disaster we had was a transport coming in on a night when a ceiling was down on top of your head. It came in over here on Popkins Lane, that little brick house that sets on the end of Popkins Lane. Well, it came in so low that it took the top off of that well house and missed the house by inches. It came and landed down on the bottom there. All the people in the plane got out, including one lady who had a little baby.

The boys at the Penn Daw fire house was standing out in the ramp looking up in the sky. They said, "Listen to that plane coming!" They jumped in their cars and went down. They hauled everybody out. The only one who really got hurt was the pilot who lost his eyesight. They gathered everyone up in automobiles and the ambulance. Penn Daw was the first fire department in Fairfax County to have an ambulance.

Mr. Proffit said he heard the noise and got up and looked out the window, and as far as he could see was just a sheet of fire. The stewardesses, they got the people out. Just as they got them out and cleared the plane, they had a sheet of fire almost a quarter of a mile of nothing but fire. They were very fortunate that no one got hurt in that.

Wilson

QUESTION: What sort of activities took place at the Old Penn Daw Firehouse?

Well, they used to have the carnivals, dances, bingo. Then they had a motor cycle race. Don't think they had but one motorcycle race. That caused too much confusion, everybody was parkin' here and parkin' there and takin' up everybody's place. That was up at the Reid Airfield.

QUESTION: When was the Penn Daw Firehouse built?

Best I remember, it was in the forties.

QUESTION: Where was it located?

You know where the Burger Chef used to be? Well, right below that. That was the original Penn Daw Fire Department. They're using it for a rug place now. Was an antique place.

QUESTION: What area did the Penn Daw Fire Department cover?

Well, at that time Penn Daw was the only one around here. Wasn't no Mount Vernon Fire Department. It was the only one in this area except down there at Fort Belvoir. But anywhere in this area Penn Daw would take care of them.

QUESTION: Tell us about some of the big fires in the area.

Well, one was down on East Groveton Street, about the second or third house. There was a right big fire there. They had a bunch of brush fires because all this was nothing but woods. People would start fires, then they'd get out of hand.

QUESTION: How has the fire department changed since back in the forties?

Now it's practically all paid firemen. I think they still got what they call the volunteer fire department up there. Back then there wasn't no pay. They had big sirens out and when that siren went off, well, all the volunteers, if they wasn't working, they'd run down to the firehouse and jump on a truck and take off.

You have to take the training before you can become chief. Back then it was mostly on the job, like going out and training how to fight that fire.



Penn Daw Fire Department in parade

Chinn

In the early 40's when Penn Daw Fire Department was first organized, it was more or less the center of attraction. We had the community civic meetings, V.F.W. meets and other organizations at the fire house. We also had fund raising activities going on like turkey shoots, dances, bingo, fund drives, and carnivals. Before the Dixie Pig was there, the fire department used to hold carnivals there on the corner.

Most of the equipment we had was army surplus. A '49 Chevrolet command car we converted into the first ambulance we had. A '36 Indiana pumper was also surplus. This is where we got our start. It wasn't until 1951 that we bought our first custom piece of fire apparatus, a 1951 Mac with a 750 gallon pump and a 500 gallon water tank on it.

At that time we didn't have any fire hydrants out in this area. Fires that we went to, we had to carry our own water or draft water from a creek, swimming pool, or something. It wasn't until the late 50's that we got our water supply from fire hydrants. When I first came to work for Penn Daw, we had two hydrants, down at the Penn Daw Hotel and at the Belle Haven Country Club. If we had a fire in Engleside, in Hybla Valley, or Groveton, we had to carry water from one of those hydrants, whichever was the closest.

In those days we didn't have the training or the equipment we have now. We had no breathing apparatus. You had to go in and just hold your handkerchief over your nose and inhale the smoke. Now we have Scott Air Packs, self-contained breathing apparatus that we can put on our back and go in. Most of the fire was fought from the outside at that time. Now all the fire fighting is done from within the building.

The volunteers did all this. We didn't hire nobody to do this because we didn't have the money. We had one of the most active volunteer departments in the county. It stayed this way from 1944 up until about 1965. It was at that time the volunteers started dropping off. We had so much activity going on in the station that a volunteer couldn't work a full time job and be a volunteer, too.

Our cannon is a memorial to the veterans of World War II from the Groveton area, dedicated by the V.F.W. The reason we moved from down on the highway was because the state widened Number 1 highway and it make it kinda hard getting onto the highway. That's when we decided to buy this piece of land here, a little better than an acre of ground for \$25,000. The building itself was \$203,000. At the same time we were buying a new ambulance. The volunteers decided, "OK, let's make a deal with Fairfax County. We'll give 'em the building and all the assets, providing they supply us with 26 additional paid men." We knew the volunteers were fading out. It's worked out real well.

I was on the plane crash in Washington National Airport when the Bolivian pilot crashed the plane and killed 55 people. At the time it was one of the worst disasters in this country. I was on the scene of the collapse of the Skyline Center. I was the first chief officer there and I ran the scene for about 17 days, working 12-14 hours a day until we got all the bodies out. We had an apartment house up here in Groveton on Eastside Drive and Number 1 highway where three or four kids burned up and the mother. At that time we had no water so we lost the whole building. We were unable to get anybody out of it. By the time we got there it was pretty well involved in fire.

In the volunteer departments the chiefs are elected by popular votes of the membership. I work for Fairfax County and now it's strictly through competitive exams. All the way up.

We have three shifts, A, B, and C. One shift works days, one works nights and the other's off. They work a 10 hour day, and a 14 hour night. Right now we have 33 men working at this station. That's 11 on a shift. Out of the station we run an engine company which consists of 2 (1,000 gallon per minute) pumpers, a 100 foot ladder truck which is a tiller (driven from the front and back), a heavy duty squad truck, two ambulances, and a jeep. We do all the water rescue from Alexandria to Fort Belvoir on the Potomac. We have two boats, one big boat and one little boat. We get a lot of calls, water rescue, especially when summer storms come up and sail boats turn over. We go out and pick people up.

The Penn Daw Station is still leading the balance of the county in total calls. They run more calls than any other station. We have 25 other stations and this is the busiest station in Fairfax County.

Gypsies: Devers

We used to have them (gypsies) come by a little later than this time of year. I imagined they came up from the south. They would come into the motels along No. 1 highway. They spread out. I never had any trouble with them. The man would come to the office in a very big car. Once in a while they'd come in a truck. The next would be his wife.

She would be dressed in a gypsy costume. I would worry because they were hard to get out, not as far as paying, but they would bring in others and they would want to stay and stay. Of course I didn't know whether they'd have a gathering or what.

Vozzola

I remember when one of the gypsy kings died and they were all on the grounds of the Alexandria Hospital. They were dark. Some of the women appeared to be very beautiful. In those days they traveled with horses.

Dove

I don't know about too many gypsies. They would maybe rent little houses and stay in some of these trailer parks and cabins. We had one cabin at Totem Pole Lodge at the corner of Richmond Highway, that had a fire in there one day, and there was some 26 gypsies living in a one room cabin.

Proffitt

My wife's grandfather ran a dairy where Beacon Field was, before it was ever an airfield. He used to run a dairy for Mr. Reid, who owned the property. That family grew up at the corner of South Kings Highway and Memorial Street. The gypsies used to camp in there along South Kings Highway. I was never over to the camp, but she's been there when she was small. She could show you a scar on her knee, that she got running away from the camp one time. They were going down there to spy on them or something. Somebody saw them and they all ran. She ran and got her leg caught in a piece of barbed wire. I don't know what time of year they were camping there. Probably spring and summer, because they travel with the weather.

Hecox

There was this group of gypsies that come into the area during the war. The draft took them off the streets and put them in houses. I happen to know a lady that was one of them. She married the father of one of my son's best friends. You know, some of those people can be very good and very honest. They get a bad reputation. It's just like anybody that does something wrong and then everybody gets blamed, you know?

Ghost stories: Sprouse

Did I tell you the ghost story about the mean man? His name was Richard Chichester and he lived down on Telegraph Road and he was so mean to his slaves that they called him "Hard Chichester" behind his back. He had been heard walking and dropping his boots down on the floor when he takes them off to go to bed. He lives in a house called Mount Airy which is down near Fort Belvoir and he's buried across Telegraph Road in Newington subdivision. There's a little family cemetery there and his tombstone just says "Hard Chichester." The tombstone originally said "Richard Chichester" but there was a bad storm in the 1920's down there and the next day they went over to the cemetery to see if any damage had been done and found that lightening had struck and chipped off a corner of the stone and so it took the "Ric" off his first name and now it just says "hard Chichester." It was very muddy and there were no footprints within the little grave yard and yet they couldn't find this other part of the piece of stone and so its sort of vengeance upon the man.

He was supposed to have been so nasty he kicked out one of the slaves eyes because the slave wasn't quick enough in helping him take off his boots. When he died a red rabbit ran out from under his bed and the slaves all said that that was the devil leaving.

Adams

There used to be a barn down the road where they said you could hear chains rattling. A few of us banded together and said we were going to see. We had a shot gun and anything was down there we were prepared to meet it. We heard these chains and it was as natural as it could be. They said they were chains of the slaves that early slave holders had chained up and left and they died of starvation. There was no barn down there, but you could hear the chains dragging on the floor just as plain, if your imagination was good enough.

We found out there was a man who had a couple of dogs that he didn't want to buy dog tags for, so he used to chain his dogs out there and that was the chain dragging around. They didn't look like the devil, just like mongrel dogs.

Most stories are just amusing things for children. You get around the fireplace and listen to these stories. Of course the fire was half dark and the fireplace would be the only light in the house and you could look into the fireplace with flames leaping and someone would tell you, "there he comes through the wall now!" You turn around right quick and see your own shadow or somebody else's that was reflected from the fireplace to the wall. The kids would always scream and holler and they were sure after that there was a ghost 'cause they saw it.

I knew one fellow who claimed that he had mysterious powers and voodoo power. He would chew up a clump of fat meat and you wouldn't be aware that he was chewing this fat meat, and he would tell you, "I can spit lightning!" When he had a good mouthful of the meat chewed up—and he chewed tobacco and had cultivated the art of spitting a long ways in a stright line—he'd spit the grease into the fire and she'd go up in a big blue flame. We all figured him as being a weird man that could do things.

And when he got so he couldn't get around at all, he told some of us about how he used to chew that fat meat and spit it in the fire. He said, "You chew it and it'll make you sick!"

Land and Wildlife

Arnold

I would catch carp. Well all game fish like bass and crappie and pike. Wouldn't catch them to sell 'em for commercial, but, you'd catch shad, during the season when shad was runnin' and you'd catch carp and catfish and blue gills. And fish called tobacco boxes that's the blue gill family. But the ones we really used to sell were like rock fish. You'd catch boatloads of 'em really. We used to fish right up here on the boulevard at Hunting Creek. Even after they put the boulevard in there that was still a good place to fish. The water was clear, still good.

We used to fish with a big seine net. I guess it would be a half a mile long. And you'd put it on the boat and well, I don't know if you know what a seine net is. Well, it would be say 18 or 20 feet deep, and you had a lead line that'd be the bottom and you had your net. Then you had a cork line to keep the top of it up and a lead line—so you had it packed on the boat. And you had a long rope, say three or four blocks long that somebody would stand on shore and hold it.

You'd go out so far and you'd make a horseshoe, make a turn just like that. Of course livin' here all these years you knew just about where to fish. And with it you could cover say a quarter mile in the water and somebody would hold it. If we didn't have enough help we'd tie it to the tree along the shore. Then two men would row this big boat out and make the horseshoe and then you'd start pullin' it in.

Then when you got the net in the shore it'd take two men. One man to pull the lead line and one the cork line. You just kept pullin' it in and what fish were in there would stay in there. You'd bring it into shore and that's where you'd catch your fish. That's why when I say you'd catch two or three boatloads you really would.

My father and my brothers used to fish commercially. Now when we lived over there right along the boulevard where that park area is, well we had a big fish pond there. I guess it was about two blocks long.

There was a real tiny little creek that backed up in there, that probably gave him the idea. It was easy to dredge out and they dug this pond out. It had all these natural springs in there, bein' that close to the water it had, oh, ten or eleven different springs in there. All that fresh water in there was good to put those fish in.

In the summertime we'd catch those loads of fish like carp and catfish and the market wouldn't be good for 'em. You wouldn't get a penny a pound for 'em then. It wouldn't pay ya to take 'em over to D.C., so he would put 'em in the pond. Then in the wintertime when the river froze over, he'd crack the ice in the pond and he had a small seine, he'd seine 'em out.

There used to be trucks from Baltimore and Philadelphia. They were tank trucks and they'd be full of water. Had a pump on it to pump air in it, keep the fish alive. And they'd come down here and buy 'em in the wintertime, take 'em back. And there was a good market for 'em, he'd make a good livin' like that.

1943 is when it started and 1945 is when it really got bad. I don't think the war had anything to do with it. I think it was all the building and all the sewage. You didn't have as many people living down here before. You didn't have Belle View and all those places in those days so there wasn't that raw sewage dumped in there. Down here everybody had an outhouse, so there was no sewage dumped in it at all then.

I remember in the evening us kids, we'd get a towel and a cake of soap and every evenin' we'd go down there and take a bath, really. It was clear. I know a lot of people say that was a silly thing to do, but it was really clear enough to drink. It was really beautiful.

You could look down, comin' across that trestle bridge, say 20 or 30 feet and see fish swimming and all kinds of different kinds of grass growing in there. There's not a thing in there, no grass or anything in there today to purify that water. I mean you gotta have things in there like that for the fish to live too, and there's not a darn thing in there like that.

Then back in 1933 the government imported chinese chestnuts, that's what we called 'em and it was just a real wide thing like a star, had five prongs. Real sharp and got real hard as a rock. Like a needle if you stepped on the darned thing!

They said that they brought those things over here to feed the fish. Well, the things just grew and multiplied so that before I went into the service in 1940 the water was so thick that you couldn't even row a boat from here to Maryland. Really, that's how thick it got in there. Why, it got so bad it killed the other vegetation off and there was just nothing to breathe in there. It wasn't even good for the fish 'cause they couldn't get a whole lot of oxygen.

So it got so bad, the engineers had to come along and cut all of that out. It took 'em about ten years to get it all out, but they finally did.

They'd spend each summer, a few guys out of college and high school kids, and they'd all get jobs doing it. Working on motor boats that had motors on the propellers in the back, and cut the grass up. They'd have another boat that would come along and pick it up and take it back to shore. Anything to get rid of it, but it took a long time.

Beard

I was county agricultural agent for Fairfax County, Virginia from 1937 through 1970. I was a representative of Virginia Polytechnical Institute and the County of Fairfax, and also of the United States Department of Agriculture. Our main objective was to take the information from the experiment stations of the state of Virginia to the farmers and the homeowner who use it. This included home demonstration work, food, nutrition, and clothing. It also included farm crops, livestock, horticulture, vegetables, Four-H club work, youth programs, and things of this kind, that the state agriculture and Home Economics Department was interested in distributing to the people. In addition to that we distributed various outlines and bulletins which were published by the Federal Department of Agriculture and by the state of Virginia which the people in Fairfax County used in their every day life and programs.

The land in this area here was principally farming. Fairfax County was the leading dairy county in the state of Virginia. There were 317 commercial dairy farms in Fairfax County when I came here to work in 1937. They marketed their milk through a co-operative known as the Maryland-Virginia Milk Producers Association. Fairfax County was large enough to have three directors in this area. One of them was Mr. Lud Popkins who lived right down the road here on Popkins Lane. Shortly thereafter he went out of the dairy business. His brother, Earl Popkins, became the director from this eastern area of Fairfax County. This was in 1937-38.

This part of the county also produced a lot of truck crops. They had grapes, apples, and vegetables like cabbage, turnips, tomatoes, and string beans. We had farm markets in those days, where a farmer could take his produce from the farm. He'd pick it one evening, take it in the next morning and offer it for sale right there in the farmer's market in Alexandria, and also in Washington, D.C. In those days we had automobiles, and trucks so it didn't take them very long to get to market.

Down the road there were several nurseries that grew flowers for sale. One of the largest nurseries was right down at the end of Number 1 highway, just at it entered Alexandria. They wholesaled their flowers to the flower shops in Washington and Baltimore.

A third thing which we had down here was poultry. People needed eggs and fried chicken in the restaurants, and at the military reservations. Many of those eggs and chickens were produced right in this neighborhood. You see, we didn't have electrical refrigeration and we didn't have good highways with large refrigerated trucks to keep farm produce fresh as we do today. Most of the foods that were grown for the cities or urban communities were produced nearby.

Another factor which wasn't too healthy in some respects were hog farms. The farmers had a great big fence around a piece of woods. They would go to the hotels

and the military reservations, get the garbage, and bring it out and put it on a board or concrete platform and let the hog go in and eat it. After the hogs got all the garbage they could handle they'd go down and take a nap in the woods. This was quite profitable because anyone could make a profit in producing a farm product if you got feed free. Health ordinances today do not permit this type of activity.

There were two Popkins brothers, Parker brothers, the Masons, W. F. P. Reid over here on Beacon Hill. C. K. Wilkinson down the road here just a piece. There were many that I didn't become personally acquainted with because in 1941 I was called to war and I didn't get back for 4½ years. By that time Springfield, Groveton, Kings Park and all the others were starting to have housing developments. The pigs had gone and people were coming in. Although these dairy farms lasted a little longer than this because somehow cows don't smell quite as bad as pigs.

The farms varied, but the average farm was about 100 acres. Back in those days many people had farms of 150 acres, and 50 acres of it was in woods. Also, a farmer usually cut his own fence posts out in his own wood. If you wanted some lumber you hauled your own logs to the saw mill from your own trees. The woods furnished leaves for bedding and for mulching. It furnished a place for the cow to go down in the woods and have a baby calf or the horse to find a place to hide to have a baby colt. It produced some protection on cold winter days when the animals were out getting some exercise. Many of these pig pens were down in the woods because it didn't need much shelter. 30 to 50 acres of most all the farms being in woods and bushes was a pretty good idea.

Generally speaking, a farmer could support around from 20 to 30 cows on a hundred acres. This meant about 3 acres per cow. There was quite an advantage to raise your own feed. It was also to your advantage to have your own pasture and let the cows eat all the grass they could.

The corn crop was usually followed by wheat or oats. The wheat was sold to the mill for somebody to make bread out of and some was kept over to feed the chickens. If they grew oats, horses or chickens either one could eat oats. Then the third or fourth years you had it in clover or timothy or some form of hay. Most of these people had a four year crop rotation. You generally tried to have as many or twice as many acres of hay as you had either corn and wheat. This rotation was a good thing to do because if they planted corn in the same field every year the insects or diseases would get bad. Now later on there were strains of corn developed which were resistant to the insects and the diseases. In those days they didn't spray corn at all. They found that if they rotate around, the corn insects didn't bother the hay and the hay insects, if there were any, didn't bother the corn.

Deer and wild turkeys did all right until automobiles came along. A deer will not live in an area where automobiles are. That's one of the big problems we have with the parks today. Just as soon as they build a big park they build a big road right through it and the deer will not live where you have automobiles. We had possums, and 'coons, and I expect you still have possums and coon around here. Crows didn't do much except eat corn and get in the farm crops and one thing and another and it was usually considered a nuisance, but we had 'em anyway.

We had a little bird that was right much of a nuisance because he carried disease from one farm to another and that was the English Sparrow. I've been in Washington, D.C. and Alexandria too, and seen those things just as thick as they could be because they had a lot of horses in Alexandria, and Washington and they'd drop grain all around

the streets. The birds would come out and eat. Also, the rats came. You hear conservation people saying, "Why don't you save pollution and get a horse?" Can you imagine what Washington, D.C. would look like today if it had as many horses in there as it would take? The horse manure would be four feet deep on the streets from one place to another! In those days the men had to go up and down the streets with wheelbarrows and brooms to pick up the horse manure all over the streets.

The areas that started to being developed first were those areas in woods and bushes because the farmers didn't want to sell any farm land. The reason they did was because the taxes got so high that they couldn't compete with the markets to the west and to the south of us. With the good roads and with refrigeration it doesn't make any difference to you, now, whether an egg is produced in Groveton or whether that egg is produced up in the Shenandoah Valley where most of 'em are.

Fishing of course took place out in the Potomac River until it became so polluted that no one wanted to eat the fish or the fish couldn't live. There was even oysters, clams, and all kinds of fish.

Now it's against the law for you to shoot and the reason its against the law is for safety purposes. It's almost impossible to shoot or explode anything now without it damaging the neighbors. Whenever you get so that you build as many as three houses on an acre, there's no place on that acre that you can shoot safely.

Same with steel traps. They used to trap possums, and now eveytime you tried to trap something like that you'd catch somebody's dog or cat. Well, you just as well catch one of their children as try to catch their dog or cat 'cause they'd make just as much fuss over it.

Originally the means of cultivating was with a hoe. Then people got a horse or a mule.

Later on we got garden tractors after W.W. II was over and they became popular. It used to be that all the tractors were run with kerosene. They didn't start very easily and you'd have to crank and crank and sometimes you could get your hoeing done before you got the tractor started. It was an evolution from a hoe, to the single shovel plough with a mule or a horse, to the garden tractor.

Hammerschlag

I've been with the Park Service for about four years. The Park Service, as a national organization, is divided into ten regions and the basic purpose is to preserve outstanding natural resources and at the same time to make sure that the resources are perpetuated so that they will be there for the following generations to enjoy and to utilize. We're talking here about an urban area and what you find mostly is a loss or decrease in even the typical wildlife. Sure, there are some beavers that are invading the C and O Canal. There are the water fowl, which have become limited simply because most of the marshes are gone. Rock Creek Valley is becoming more utilized than it used to, because that particular stream is improving.

As you go up the Potomac, away from the estuary water, the fishing improves, because the Potomac is being cleaned up. They're catching bass, and fishing is improving

above the estuary. The people walk around the point here (Haines Pt.) and they catch an occasional carp or catfish. They will catch perch during the spring runs. You don't have the nice shorelines. You don't have the tree lined bank. You don't have any of that kind of fishing anymore. You're fishing off a railing or off a rip-rap bank or that kind of thing.

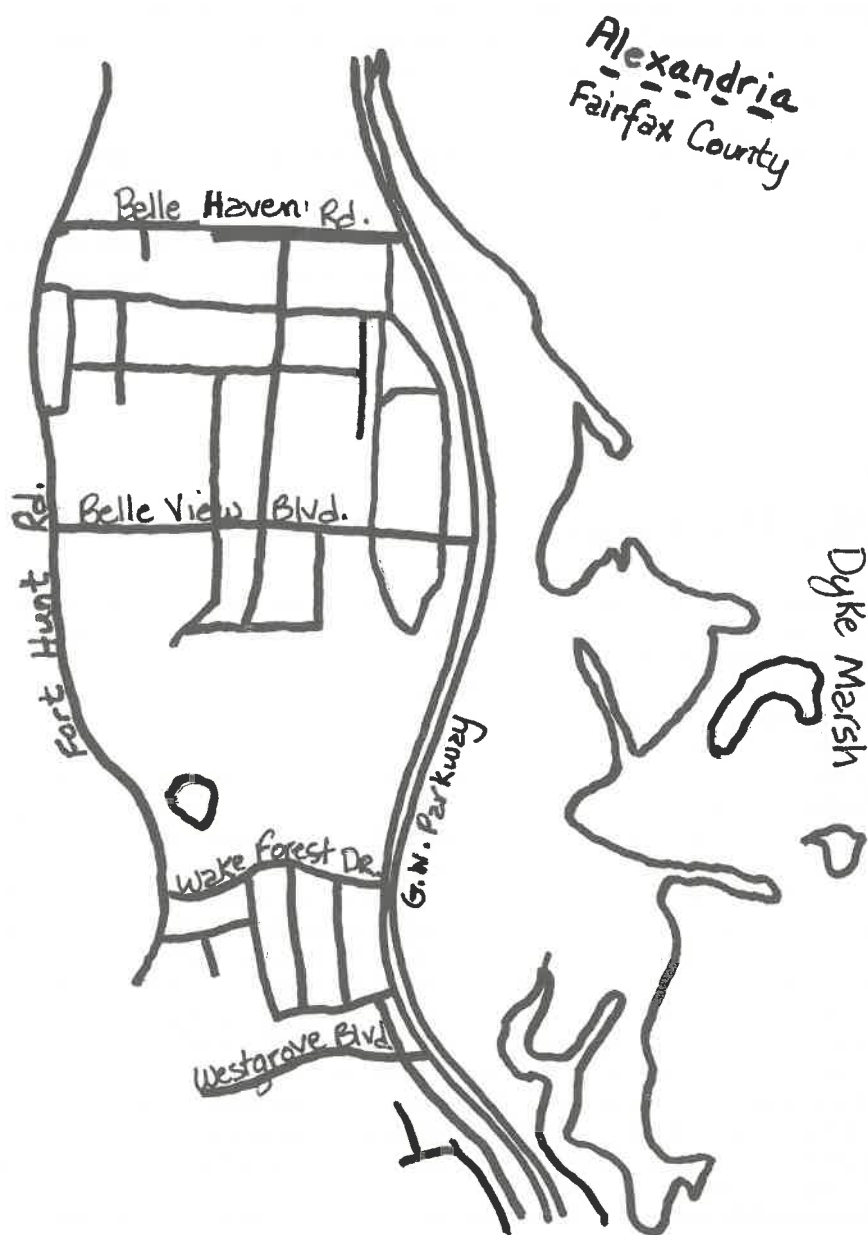
There used to be a lot in Dyke Marsh that is just not there anymore. You could bring it back maybe, but it is just not there now. Dyke Marsh is a remaining wetland area. We have lost about half of it and there's still the strong erosional influences in the deeper off-water areas where it was dredged out. We seem to be having a severe problem all along this Potomac estuary from the shoreline. I am not really sure what it is due to, perhaps partially boating and increased wave action, but there is, as there has been in the past 200 years, a very strong depression of the shoreline throughout the area.

G.W. Parkway

The following is an excerpt chosen from the United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service, study of the George Washington Memorial Parkway published February 14, 1977.

"The George Washington Memorial Parkway habitats are field, upland, forest, swamp and marsh. The western side of the parkway is a mixture of open areas (fields) and upland forest. The upland forest is vegetated with red cedar and black oak. Other species present in significant number are Virginia pine, red willow, and flowering dogwood. The open areas are seeded with several species of fescue, perennial rye, and Kentucky bluegrass. Interspersed in the grass are chickweed, speedwell, orchard grass and ground ivy. The eastern side of the parkway is largely occupied by a mature deciduous hardwood forest. The upland forest is primarily vegetated with several species of oak, black locusts, yellow poplar, and red cedar. Dense growth of Japanese honeysuckle dominate the undergrowth. The swamp habitat along the western shore of the Potomac is chiefly composed of red ash and silver maple. Additional prevalent species are sycamore, box elder, red willow, button bush, black gum, and staghorn sumac. Dominant herbaceous plants in the undergrowth are dodder, water hemp, and Halberd-leaved tear-thumb. Regularly and irregularly inundated fresh to mildly brackish marshes occur to the north and east of the project area. These wetlands are dominated by narrow-leaved cattail, water hemp, Halberd-leaved tearthumb and sweetflag. Other aquatic and emergent vegetation present in significant quantities are pickerelweed, wild rice, yellow water lily, arrow arum and swamp rose." (p. 8-9)

"Mammals representative of the upland fields and forests adjacent to the parkway are white tailed deer, raccoon, opossum, gray squirrel, eastern cottontail, gray fox and skunk. Birds common to these upland habitats are crow, several species of sparrow, bobwhite, morning dove, mockingbird, robin, starling, common grackle, blue jay and cardinal. Mammals that utilize the wetlands are muskrat, raccoon, white tailed deer, and beaver. Birds and waterfowl present in the wetlands are redwing blackbird, long billed marsh wren, American egret, and great blue heron. Several species of geese and



Map showing location of Dyke Marsh

Risley

When I went down to Dyke Marsh it was all a new area to me and I could see that there were little passageways through the marsh and so on. I learned only recently that all those places have names. People went in there to trap turtles and fish. You still see fishermen going in there who know the marsh quite well. I understand during prohibition there was often a still in there. People went fishing there on the docks to the West Grove Plantation, the area which is now Belle Haven Country Club "Plantation." When you go to history you find references to Hunting Creek that date back to about 1690. Someone had a fort where Hunting Towers is now. I'm sort of interested in the modern period.

Dyke Marsh has had a lot of valuable sand, valuable to construction people so that property rights were bought up by a company called Smoot Sand and Gravel. Up until about five years ago there was dredging out there, pumping sand which they sell to a concrete company. There were some people in the area who saw that this was a valuable resource being dredged away and put pressure on Congress and a bill was passed about twenty years ago that got this property from Smoot, Sand and Gravel not for money, but for some land exchange. At any rate Dyke Marsh is now the property of the Department of the Interior. It was designated as a sanctuary and it is a water fowl refuge and so we shouldn't expect to see it developed. I just say expect because you can't really rely on anything.

There was an article in 1952 "Atlantic Naturalist" about "Shall Dyke Marsh be saved." This is 25 years ago and people were concerned about preserving this valuable piece of property. After Congress passed its law someone called up the Department of the Interior to find out what they were doing to preserve the wildlife there, and the reply was "I am not aware that anything is being done."

The reason it is sort of interesting is that the birds are coming and going all the time. One man's been keeping track and he's seen about 140 different species just around Dyke Marsh. You don't have very many places to see that many different kinds of birds. Last week there was an Iceland tern, no an Icelandic gull, which came from the Arctic. You can see world travelers down there. You can experience the river.

I go down there to watch birds. Most people call themselves "birders." You go to the birds' habitat. You go down south of Hunting Towers and there's the Belle Haven Picnic area. Park the car there, then walk south, going towards the Marina and there's an entrance way with a wire fence and a wooden fence to keep motorcycles out. If you want to, join the crowd about 8 o'clock in the morning on Saturdays. Anyone's welcome. It's kind of an introduction to the marsh to go with a group of people. They point out various kinds of birds as you walk along.

Clocker

Years ago when the assault was first started on Dyke Marsh, much of that area was owned by the Smoot Sand and Gravel Co. That caused the start of the Potomac Valley Recreation and Conservation Consult and that was the focal point. Later on after I got here I was named to represent the people from Alexandria and Southerly on that Consult.

I'm a retired forester. When I was in the National Forest I had a great deal of experience in this field. Problems got to be so intense that we (the consult) were meeting one night a week, then two nights a week, and so on. I had been through three coronaries before I came here. I used to break down doors when they wouldn't open, and sleep when I could so I finally paid for it, but it's hard to keep your nose out of things. The doctor told me, "No more." Well, I left the job in the Potomac Valley Recreation consult.

The next assault on Dyke Marsh was in the early 1950's, when this Belle View apartment group were gonna put up twenty story apartments. When you put up that kind of stuff you had to put down piling. Since you had to put piling down, the more stories you could get on it, the cheaper! Then they were going to pump the field. That's when the fight was renewed. They wound up with these three white apartments you see down there now. That was just the first step. The next step was to go right out and make it look like Rio de Janiero, all the way.

Then the local radio station, WPIK, wanted to put a tower where they put this highway, Interstate 495. Of course that would have gone up hundreds of feet. So we mustered everyone we could to fight that, including the Airlines Pilot Association. It was a hazard to them, sticking up right down there. We finally got rid of that, but in the mean time I was prodding to get that land into public ownership. We didn't have the authority. If you don't have the authority you get it. So we got two or three congressmen interested. One of them was a woman from Ohio. Sometimes you get a knowledgeable woman like that in her position, they get a lock on something, and they're gonna get it done. That's the kinda people I like to deal with. She went down there, looked at it, walked through all that and finally got the authority to make a trade with Smoot. That's the way that area was eventually saved.

It (Dyke Marsh) starts to the south of the bridge in Hunting Towers, on the riverside of the Parkway. When I came here there were houses there. They got rid of those, got that into public ownership. Those houses were not high quality, but people lived there and probably would have liked to stay, but there are times when you have to give way to the public's interest.

To the north of the Hollin Hall Shopping Center directly across the parkway on the river side is private land. As far as I know, that's still private. They were gonna build high rise apartments there a few years ago. There is some public land in front of it to the north. That's about the south end of Dyke Marsh.

When I built up on the hill there was nothing between me and the river except the parkway. It was all forest. I had all the snakes and birds and mammals in my yard. I had a mailbox out in the street and I gave that up every summer 'cause the bluebirds used it. Who see's any blue birds anymore? The mailman and I decided that we were outranked, so we made other arrangements through the summer. I have over sixty species

of birds in my yard. I feed and water them. I have three bird baths which I keep fresh all the time. I fan 'em and change their diapers. I have 'em through the winter and summer.

The remnants of them now are down at Dyke Marsh. That area in there is perfect for that but to anyone else that area is worthless. These are critical areas in the life cycle and the food chain of water life. The corps of engineers wants to give up some field down there and some of the old stuff Smoot Sand and Gravel dug out. We have to be very careful that we fill only up to a certain depth from the surface down in order to retain our water bird life in there. They're willing to do that. They're very progressive in spite of what you read about the Corps Engineers—very progressive outfit.

Dyke Marsh is the center of everything around here. Last year we had the big-horned owl. Everybody had to go down. I have that same owl in my yard. Went home one evening and my wife said, "My gosh, here's our friend." She was sitting on the power line into the house. Dyke Marsh you'll find that is a fascinating laboratory. To look at it from the uneducated eye it looks like a lot of waste land that'd be better if we could put some dispossessed people there and some high rise apartments for the rich. Everything is worthless until people start looking at it with the right eye and using it the way it should be used. Then it is invaluable.

Once in a while I walk down in the swampy area. Sometimes I get up to my knees. I like to see what's happening. I always see my pets, my deer tracks down there. Now that dogs are supposed to be penned up, why they're probably doing quite well down there where there's plenty of food for them.

We had some of the migrating geese nest down there now, every summer they stay here. They don't go any farther north. They like that down there. It's close to the White House. They have nice views! After the corn and small grain harvest it's loaded with food that the water birds just love. That's the reason there's hunters to the south of us, in the Carolina's specially, and further south that haven't liked this because the migrating ducks and geese have been staying here. The water's open, food's good in the fields, so they haven't gone down there to be shot like they used to. Well, Dyke Marsh is a pretty popular place for quite a few of those birds.

In a community the most of the people never know. They never know until it's too late. How do you get word to them? You contact the media to try to get them to advise people. All people don't read either. They don't pick up a paper except to read the funnies. Public meetings—but who goes to public meetings? Then you try to go to doors with handouts. You'll find a gathering of some, who are saying, "I'm not gonna put up with this," and then you start putting the pressure on. Get your facts. You can go down there and get in front of the bulldozers and all that all you want to and the media'll come take your picture, but that's not the best approach. Get your hard facts and then stand on them and force them to put theirs on the table.

What is Dyke Marsh? Who knows? Find out. Go to the public records and see their maps and charts. Find out what has been done. Who do I want to join up with? If there isn't anyone to join up with, do I want to go out in front and start laying the stuff on the line and get people to join up with me?

I'm really tired. I'm in my 70's and I am so busy I haven't had time to go back on that old history. I got the looking glass out.

Abbott

I've been living here in New Alexandria since 1950. I've lived here in Waynewood since 1958.

I got interested in bird-watching when I was a little kid. My dad used to take me out for walks and sled rides and things like that. He was interested in animals and on our walks I used to see birds. One time a pheasant flushed up from under our feet practically and flew into a house and broke its neck. I went over and picked it up and saw all those beautiful feathers on it. It sort of hooked me right then. I was about six I guess.

I belong to the Audubon Naturalists Society here in Washington, the Virginia Society of Ornithology, The Maryland Society of Ornithology, The American Ornithologists Union, and two or three others affiliated with birding. The American Birding Association is the latest one, strictly for hot shot birders who want to travel around and keep a long life list.

I think perhaps one thing you might be interested in, is that I conduct a Bald Eagle nest survey on the Chesapeake Bay Region, which means that I go out in airplanes and look for Eagle nests. I find them and find out how many young they hatch out every year.

Around nesting season in this region, the abundance of Bald Eagles is about 80 pairs. This is down from about 250 pairs when they did the survey by the Audubon Society, back in 1936. We finally discovered that it was pesticides. Pollution of the water gets in the fish, eagles eat the fish, and it kills them off. It disturbs their calcium producing process. Rachel Carson's book, *Silent Spring*, I think more than anything else, got the states interested in curtailing the use of these very long life carbonated pesticides, which are extremely toxic. They kill the bugs but they also kill everything else they come in contact with. So now the Eagle population is doing a little better. The first year of an Eagle's life is the worst year as far as survivability. All the records we have of birds that are found dead, are in the first year. If they can survive that first year, they'll be all right.

In this area we have a resident population of about 50 species of birds that you can find all year round. In the summer we get an additional 60 to 65 species that nest here that aren't here any other time. Then there are migration periods, which are the spring and fall. We get an additional 100 or so that go through.

The birds I like best, are eagles and hawks of the Raptor family. I'd say we have 4 species of resident hawks, which include the turkey vulture, the red tail, red shoulder, and the little sparrow hawk or kestrel. We also have several migrant hawks.

An experience that was mighty frightening at the time, was during an Eagle survey. I was in an Army helicopter and we were going around an Eagle's nest. It was about 80 feet up in a pine tree in a little open area where there were not too many big trees

right close, and I'm taking movies of it. All of a sudden the pilot taps me on the shoulder and says, "We're going down." And we sure were. We were going right down full power. We went right into the tree and the blades wrapped all around the tree and we turned upside down. Came to rest three feet off the ground upside down; gasoline pouring out all over the place. Luckily I had my map. We got out of the plane afraid it would catch fire but it didn't. We checked the map and found a way out on a dirt road and got out to a place where we could telephone. The Army took a very dim view of that. They said, "The next time we fly you on your Eagle mission, the pilot will stay at 200 feet altitude and keep up about 90 knots and none of this fooling around taking pictures."

One time we got chased by Eagles. An Eagle had a young bird in a nest when our helicopter came over it and that old bird took off and dive-bombed us about four times. The pilot was scared to death. The Eagles in this area are not as wild as the ones up in Alaska, where there are plenty of Eagles. Up there they attack anything that moves near the nest and several planes have crashed because of Eagles going through the windshield. But most of our Eagles here just sit and watch us go by. Even if you climb the tree to band the young, the old Eagles take off and fly around in the air at a distance. But they won't come and chase you.

I'd say I've watched birds in all the states except in the Northwest. I've never been out in the Northwest. I've lived in California, New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Pennsylvania, and Virginia.

I've seen quite a number of what I call rare birds. A rare bird nowadays, would be one that there may not be more than 100 left, like the California Condor, which lives only in the San Gabriel Mountains of Los Angeles County of California. This is the biggest bird in the United States and its got a wing spread of about 11 feet. Its a type of vulture really. I saw three of those when I lived out there. We went up into the canyon and found three of them circling around in the air. They made a sanctuary out of the mountain range now just for the Condor.

My favorite spots around here are Hunting Creek and Dyke Marsh, just below Hunting Creek; here you can get the marsh birds as well as the water birds. There's a wood edge there that's very good for migrating birds. The river itself is a great place to stop off every time you get a chance because there are ducks swimming up and down and gulls. The Mount Vernon Woods and Fort Hunt, are great spots. Fort Belvoir is also a good spot. But those are the places I go most often.

We participate in all the big bird counts. At Christmas time, the big thing among birdwatchers is the Christmas Bird Count. This is where you go out before dawn and stay out till dark and you count every bird you can find in an area that you're assigned. Over the years the amount of information you get from that is quite interesting. Developments change things, the birds change. Some species get more common and others get rare.

I bird a little bit everyday if I can. Just going to Fort Belvoir from here, I stop along the river and look sometimes. At lunch if it's a nice day, I usually take a walk out in the woods.

Stevens

We used to keep a lot of animals. Daddy used to go trapping. Used to trap quail and things like that . . . keep them in cages so the foxes wouldn't get them. There were foxes all over the place. There was a little kind of pigeon coop near the chicken houses, just full of pigeons. I think I had some pet pigeons. We did catch a fox one time, which we kept for maybe a day or so in a cage which was a horrible thing to watch. We kept an opossum in captivity for a while, but it died. No lions or tigers or bears as I recall. Hundreds of raccoons! There were plenty of raccoon skins tacked to the chicken house.

Also in those early days, there was a chicken farm with thousands of chickens and a good many turkeys. You couldn't get me near the turkey pen. Turkeys are big and ugly and you walk into five hundred of 'em, you wonder if you're going to make it out alive. All the mice were in the chicken houses. There were two long rooms in the chicken houses and between them there was a storage room. You'd pick up a bunch of feed bags and uncover a nest of mice.

I was chased by a snake once. I looked at him, he looked at me and started taking after me. I was running fast, I looked back and there it comes, "psst, psst," down the path. Home to mama! Stay outta that patch! There were black snakes and king snakes. When I was very young, there were lots of scares of copperheads.

Gallagher

We still have wild animals here. We have opossum and things like that. It's a funny thing. I used to hear people talk about deer. In all the years that I've lived in this area I never saw a live deer. There's more deer up at Ft. Belvoir now than there ever was when I lived there fifty years ago. I saw one go across the road one night down near Davidson Airfield. I almost hit him. On my way down to the Lazy Susan. Five cars just barely missed him. Came right out of the woods. With those hooves they've got, they couldn't grab hold of the concrete. They were slippin' and a-slidin', darn near scared the heck out of us. We could have gotten killed if we hit one of them. I never saw any of the foxes, any of these animals that people claimed they saw, but I never saw any of these things. I think animals are coming in now.

Desmond

The warden said it came from Fort Belvoir. They apparently was doing a survey down there and were spooking a lot of the deer up. This one just got mixed up, came through the development from the other side of the highway. When it crossed the highway it ran into a car waiting to make a left hand turn. As it ran up between two apartment buildings. The kids were chasing it. They cornered it up in the corner of the building where I am at, right there at my dining room window. The warden said that apparently it must have seen its reflection in the glass and thought it was another deer looking for a way out. It jumped through my window, broke the glass, and landed on the dining

room table, its legs spread out from under it. I had a bunch of house plants set up in the window sill. It knocked all those over. Since it hit that car it was bleeding so it put blood on everything.

This friend of mine came down and told me that a deer had jumped through my window. I thought he was kinda bullshitting me, but when I went up to the window and saw it all smashed out and the house all messed up, I figured he was telling the truth. I told him to go get his gun. I was going to shoot it, but what he brought me was not quite what I needed to kill it, so I just waited for the warden to come in.

It (the deer) was down the corner of my bed against the wall, kinda hidden. When I opened the door to see it, it jumped over my bed to the other side of the room. It just started running into the corner, trying to get out of the corner. Since I didn't have a gun to kill it, I just shut the door and waited for the warden to come. They were going to shoot it with a hypodermic blow gun. I asked them if they would let me have the meat after they shot it. They told me that the drug's got nicotine. Nicotine poisons the meat.

The warden came in the bedroom to shoot the deer. The deer saw him and started running around. There was a policeman there too, standing at the door. The deer starts jumping around and he pulls the door shut and locks the warden in with this deer. The warden's yelling to open the door. The cop is holding it shut. So I opened the door up for him. When the warden came out, the deer came out too. That blew their chance for the hypodermic gun. The cop shot him as he was trying to jump back out the window.

The cop shot it three times and didn't kill it. I brought out a 22 that I had and gave it to the warden. The warden shot it in the head. They let me have the meat. I dressed it out, since it was all cut up from jumping through the glass. So, I just kept the meat and that was it. I wrapped it up and put it in the freezer that night.

Credits

STUDENTS:

Theresa Allan
Tom Baldwin
Kim Barnes
Alison Carper
Pat Carter
Steve Collins
Mike Dawson
Denise Duty
Clara Ferguson
Lisa Fingeret
Judy Fisher
H. L. Frazier
Brad Furman
Kevin Harlow
Tim Harlow
Donna Hecox
David Hellmuth
John Hensley
Connie Jeffrey
Glenn Kaplan
Victor Kelly
Tammy King
Mary McCarthy
Chris McNeal
Sharon Meagher
Cheryl Meeks
Cheryl Memmo
Charles Muck
Beth Murphy
Ellen O'Donnell
Michel O'Quinn
Lisa Powers
Janice Price
Gary Proffit
Bryan Rutledge
Faith Rodman
Blane St. George
Felicia Speight
Bruce Smith
Renee Stuart
Lillie Suthard
Tony Taylor
Richard Terrell
Anne Thoma

LaVerne Washington
Rachel Williams
Vincent Williams

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